

## THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025

*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*

# COME THOU LONG EXPECTED JESUS

## GATHERING HYMN 10:30am

## BLEST BE THE KING

H 74

1 Blest be the King whose com - ing is in the name of  
 2 Blest be the King whose com - ing is in the name of  
 3 Blest be the King whose com - ing is in the name of

God! For him let doors be o - pened, no hearts a - gainst him  
 God! By those who tru - ly lis - ten his voice is tru - ly  
 God! He on - ly to the hum - ble re - veals the face of

barred! Not robed in roy - al splen - dor, in  
 heard; pi - ty the proud and haugh - ty, who  
 God. All power is his, all glo - ry! All

power and pomp, comes he; but clad as are the  
 have not learned to heed but the Christ who is the  
 things are in his hand, all a - ges and the all

poor - est, such his hu - mil - i - ty!  
 Prom - ise, who has a - tone - ment made.  
 peo - ples, till time it - self shall end!

## 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 to 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.**

## KYRIE ELEISON *At 8:30am, spoken; at 10:30am, sung.*

Presider Lord, have mercy.

People **Christ, have mercy.**

Presider Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.      Lord, have mer - cy up -  
on us.      Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.      Christ, have mer - cy up -  
on us.      Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.      Christ, have mer - cy up -  
on us.      Christ, have mer - cy up - on us.      Christ, have mer - cy up -  
on us.      Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

## THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

# WE HEAR THE SACRED STORIES *Sit*

## THE FIRST LESSON

Reader A reading from the book of Isaiah.

7:10-16

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

The Word of the Lord.

At 8:30, all spoken. At 10:30, the congregation sings the antiphon one time through before the sung verses.

Refrain

Lord, make us turn to you, Lord, make us turn to you;  
let us see your face and we shall be saved.

Verses

1. O shepherd of Israel, hear us,  
enthroned on the cherubim, shine forth.  
Rouse up your might and come to save us.
2. God of hosts, turn again, we implore; look down from heaven and see.  
Visit this vine and protect it, the stock your right hand has planted,  
the son you have claimed for yourself.
3. May your hand be on the man at your right hand,  
the son of man you have confirmed as your own.  
And we shall never forsake you again;  
give us life that we may call upon your name.

Text: Psalm 80:2ac and 3b, 15–16, 18–19, *The Abbey Psalms and Canticles*, © 2018, 2010, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC; refrain trans., © 1969, ICEL  
Music: Marty Haugen, © 2012, GIA Publications, Inc.

## THE SECOND LESSON

Reader                   A reading from the letter to the Romans.                   1:1-7

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

People                   **Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ANTIphon 10:30am****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 A reading from the Gospel of Matthew. 1:18-25

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

Deacon Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord.

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

**GOSPEL ANTIphon** At 10:30, sing gospel antiphon above again.

**SERMON** *Sit*

**THE REV. LAURIE ANZILOTTI**

## THE NICENE CREED *Stand*

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.**"

*After each prayer, please respond "**Shine in our hearts.**"*

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.

People                    **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 *Sit*

*St. Francis' Episcopal Church is grateful for the generosity of all visitors and parishioners who contribute as part of the weekly offertory. If you wish, please place your contribution in the collection plate or use the QR code to give online. These gifts are used to support our parish in addition to parishioners' annual commitments.*



## THE LITURGY OF THE 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. Representatives of the congregation bring these to the common Eucharistic table.*

### OFFERTORY 10:30am

### ONE DAY IN ALL TIME

### ST. FRANCIS' SINGERS

*Congregation sings refrain with the Singers after each verse.*



We      praise you, O Christ    of    fu - ture and past,    of



each      of our days,    of    first    and of last.    We



of - fer    our bless-ing;    we      of - fer    our praise;    we



of - fer    our wait-ing    though    all    of these days.

**Doxology** *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 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 8:30am:*

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.

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.

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."

Therefore, according to his command,

People **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-friendly. 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 10:30am

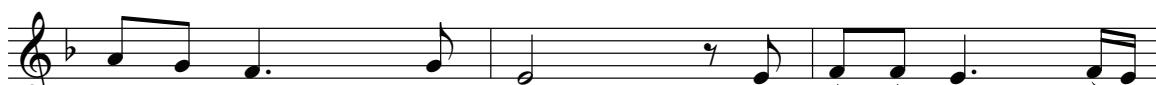
## COMFORT MY PEOPLE



2. Si - lence the thun - der, si - lence sounds of  
(3.) light in the dark - ness; be truth for our



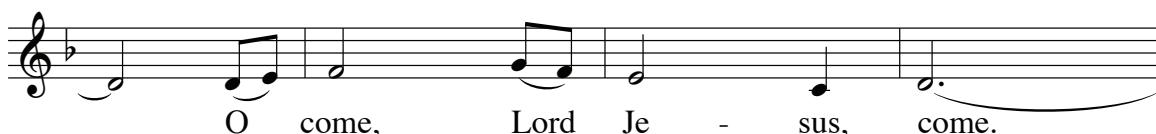
war. ' End all de - struc - tion and  
lives. Be strength for the help - less, the



com - fort those who mourn. Your dream draws  
poor and lost who cry. O sav - ing



near; your vi - sion is here.  
voice, O liv - ing choice,



1., 2. D.C. 3.

3. Be

Text: Ian Callanan, b.1971  
Tune: Ian Callanan, b.1971  
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## 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 10:30am

## PREPARE, PREPARE

## Ostinato Refrain

A musical score for a hymn. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (4/4). The melody is in soprano range. The lyrics are: "Pre-prepare! Pre-prepare the way of the Lord." The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a fermata over the word "the".

A musical score in treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The lyrics "Pre - pare! Pre - pare the way of the Lord, oh," are written below the staff. The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth note patterns. The first two measures are identical, followed by a measure of "the", then "way" (two eighth notes), "of" (two eighth notes), "the" (two eighth notes), "Lord," (two eighth notes), and "oh," (two eighth notes). The notes are connected by vertical stems and horizontal bar lines.

A musical score for a hymn. The melody is in G major, 4/4 time. The lyrics are: "Pre-prepare! Pre-prepare the way of the Lord. The Lord our God is". The music consists of a single line of notes on a five-line staff, with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. The notes include quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes, with various rests and a fermata over a note.

Musical score for 'Coming Soon' in G clef, 2/4 time, with a key signature of one flat. The score consists of two staves. The first staff ends with a repeat sign and a 'To verses' instruction. The second staff begins with an 'Oh,' and ends with a 'Last time' instruction. The lyrics 'com - ing' and 'soon.' are written below the notes.

## Verses

*Cantor:*

1. Pre - pare the way, the  
 2. Make straight the path, γ  
 3. Jus - tice and peace, γ  
 4. Sing and re - joice! The  
 5. A vir - gin will bear a son, Em -

way of the Lord.  
lev - el the hills,  
kind - ness and truth  
Lord is near,  
man - u - el:  
Read - y your hearts.  
lift up the gates.  
shall come to the earth.  
I say re - joice!  
God with us!

## DISMISSAL

## Deacon

As we await our coming Savior, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

## People

**Thanks be to God!**

## POSTLUDE

## 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 nor do we say "Alleluia." Throughout our liturgy we sing of our expectant waiting for God.

## UPCOMING AT ST. FRANCIS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

### BLUE CHRISTMAS: DECEMBER 21, WORSHIP 5PM WITH POTLUCK MEAL TO FOLLOW

*Blue Christmas service includes reflective music, prayers, readings, and Scripture, acknowledging God's presence and the hope of the coming Christ. This service speaks to those who need a quiet, reflective space in the midst of holiday chaos and to those who mourn or struggle in this season. Dr. Michael Booker preaching.*

### CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP + DINNER, DECEMBER 24, 5PM

*Traditional Christmas Eve service with catered community meal following. Suggested price \$20 per person. Parishioners are invited to bring a dessert to share. RSVP for dinner by signing up on the bulletin board.*

### CHRISTMAS MORNING WORSHIP, DECEMBER 25, 10:30AM

*A quiet, spoken service to celebrate the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

*Forum at 9:30 and mass at 10:30. A quieter morning. No 8:30am mass.*

### WEEK OF REST

*The Rule of Life in the Episcopal Church includes REST. During this week of Christmas, the parishioners and staff of St. Francis lean into REST—receiving the gift of God's grace, peace and restoration. The building is closed and all programming is on pause.*

### THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY: SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 2026

*Mass at 8:30 and 10:30, with the Forum Series "Who is Our Neighbor 5.0" beginning at 9:30.*

## AN ADVENT POEM FOR REFLECTION AND PRAYER

A Blessing for Advent

by Jan Richardson

from *Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons*

Strange how one word  
will so hollow you out.  
But this word  
has been in the wilderness  
for months.  
Years.  
This word is what remained  
after everything else  
was worn away  
by sand and stone.  
It is what withstood  
the glaring of sun by day,  
the weeping loneliness of  
the moon at night.  
Now it comes to you  
racing out of the wild,  
eyes blazing  
and waving its arms,  
its voice ragged with desert  
but piercing and loud

as it speaks itself  
again and again:  
Prepare, prepare.  
It may feel like  
the word is leveling you,  
emptying you  
as it asks you  
to give up  
what you have known.  
It is impolite  
and hardly tame,  
but when it falls  
upon your lips  
you will wonder  
at the sweetness,  
like honey  
that finds its way  
into the hunger  
you had not known  
was there.