

SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



The Second Sunday of Advent

December 7th, 2025

10:30 A.M in the Church

The Rev. Stephanie E. Parker
Rector

Welcome to our Church

WELCOME

to

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

We are delighted you are seeking God in this special place. We want you to know that wherever you are on the journey of faith, you are welcome to ask your questions here.

Services are available: Recent services are available on our website: <https://stpaulwilkesboro.org>

Newsletters: Sign-up today to receive our weekly electronic newsletter! Email the church office at office@stpaulwilkesboro.org to have your name added. If you would like a printed copy of the newsletter mailed, please call the office.

We extend a special thanks today to all that have been so generous with their time and talents in making this service possible.

200 W. Cowles St., P. O. Box 95, Wilkesboro, NC 28697

336-667-4231

www.stpaulwilkesboro.org

E-mail: office@stpaulwilkesboro.org

Pastoral Emergency Line: 336-482-6800

ONLINE GIVING QR CODE:



The Gathering

Prelude

Savior of the Nations, Come

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Welcome and Announcements

Please rise as you are comfortable.

Processional Hymn #59 Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding

Descant

2 Wak-ened by the sol-emn warn-ing, from earth's bond-age let us rise;
5 Hon-or, glo-ry, might, and bless-ing to the Fa-ther and the Son,
1 Hark! a thrill-ing voice is sound-ing: "Christ is nigh," it seems to say;
2 Wak-ened by the sol-emn warn-ing, from earth's bond-age let us rise;
3 Lo! the Lamb, so long ex-pect-ed, comes with par-don down from heaven;
4 so when next he comes with glo-ry, and the world is wrapped in fear,
5 Hon-or, glo-ry, might, and bless-ing to the Fa-ther and the Son,

2 Christ, our sun, all sloth dis-pel-ling, shines up-on the morn-ing skies.
5 with the ev-er-last-ing Spi-rit while un-end-ing a-ges run.
1 "Cast a-way the works of dark-ness, O ye child-ren of the day."
2 Christ, our sun, all sloth dis-pel-ling, shines up-on the morn-ing skies.
3 let us haste, with tears of sor-row, one and all to be for-given;
4 may he with his mer-cy shield us, and with words of love draw near.
5 with the ev-er-last-ing Spi-rit while un-end-ing a-ges run.

Words: Latin, ca. 6th cent.; tr. *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 1861, alt. Music: Merton, William Henry Monk (1823-1889); desc. Alan Gray (1855-1935).

The Gathering

Welcome and Announcements

Advent Wreath Prayers

Second Sunday of Advent

Presider High on the mountains
 Someone is shouting

People Here comes God!
Justice is marching
Peace is following
Here comes God!
Help is near
Shout for glory
Here comes God!
Through years and millennia
Through days and moments
We are traveling home.
Trusting in promises
Covered in mercy
We are traveling home.
Growing in holiness
Heading for glory
We are traveling home.
We travel in time;
May God walk with us into eternity.
We travel in hope;
May God sing with us through the darkness.
We travel in wonder;
May God dance with us in holy joy.

**All So may the blessing of the God of glory, Traveler, Storyteller, Dancer, be
 in us today and every day. AMEN.**

We light two blue candles.

Opening Acclamation

Presider: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

People: And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

Wait for the Lord Taizé

Sing 2 times

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart.

The Collect

Presider: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray.

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. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the
ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.
On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of
him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Response

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Deus, iudicium

Give the King your justice, O God, *
 and your righteousness to the King's Son;
That he may rule your people righteously *
 and the poor with justice;
That the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, *
 and the little hills bring righteousness.
He shall defend the needy among the people; *
 he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.
He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure, *
 from one generation to another.
He shall come down like rain upon the mown field, *
 like showers that water the earth.
In his time shall the righteous flourish; *
 there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.
Blessed be the Lord GOD, the God of Israel, *
 who alone does wondrous deeds!
And blessed be God's glorious Name for ever! *
 and may all the earth be filled with God's glory.
Amen. Amen.

Second Reading

Romans 15:4-13

Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles,
and sing praises to your name";

and again he says,

"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people";

and again,

"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him";

and again Isaiah says,

"The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the Gentiles;
in him the Gentiles shall hope."

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

People: Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are most comfortable

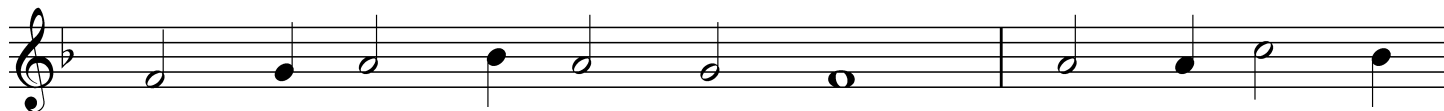
SEQUENCE HYMN #67 Comfort, Comfort Ye My People



1 Com - fort, com - fort ye my peo - ple, speak ye peace, thus
2 Hark, the voice of one that cri - eth in the des - ert
3 Make ye straight what long was crook - ed, make the rough - er



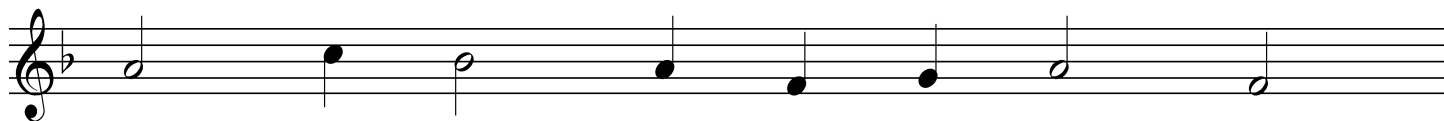
saith our God; com - fort those who sit in dark - ness
far and near, call - ing us to new re - pent - ance
pla - ces plain; let your hearts be true and hum - ble,



mourn - ing 'neath their sor - rows' load. Speak ye to Je -
since the king - dom now is here. Oh, that warn - ing
as be - fits his ho - ly reign. For the glo - ry



ru - sa - lem of the peace that waits for them;
cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way;
of the Lord now o'er earth is shed a - broad;



tell her that her sins I cov - er,
let the val - leys rise to meet him
and all flesh shall see the to - ken



and her war - fare now is o - ver.
and the hills bow down to greet him.
that the word is nev - er bro - ken.

Words: Johann G. Olearius (1611-1684); tr. Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878), alt. Music: *Psalm 42*, melody and bass Claude Goudimel (1514-1572); harm. *Hymnal* 1982.

Please stand as you are able.

The Gospel

Matthew 3:1-12

Presider: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’”

Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

Presider: The Gospel of the Lord

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ

All are seated.

The Sermon

The Rev. Stephanie E. Parker

A time of silence following the sermon.

The Nicene Creed—Wonder, Love & Praise

1. I be - lieve in God al - might - y, Au - thor of all things that
 2. I be - lieve that Je - sus suf - fered, scourged and scorned and cru - ci -
 3. I be - lieve in God's own Spir - it, bond - ing all the saints with-

be, Mak - er of the earth and heav - ens, Keep - er of the sky and
 fied; tak - en from the cross, was bur - ied— True Life there had tru - ly
 in One church, cath - o - lic and ho - ly, where for - give - ness frees from

sea. I be - lieve in God's Son, Je - sus, now for
 died. I be - lieve that on the third day Christ was
 sin; in the bod - y's res - ur - rec - tion, for the

us both Lord and Christ, of the Spir - it and of
 raised up from the grave, then as - cend - ed to God
 break - ing of death's chain gives the life that's ev - er -

Mar - y born to bring a - bun - dant life.
 right hand. He will come to judge and save.
 last - ing. This the faith that I have claimed.

Prayers of the People

- Presider Let us pray for the church and for the world.
Loving God, as we look to the day of Christ's birth help us throw wide the doors of our hearts in preparation. Help us know the depths of your love and remember you are working through us to fulfil the promises you have made.
- People O come, O come, Emmanuel**
- Presider Lord, we pray this Advent season be for us and for the world a season of light, of hope and of joy. May we give and receive the most important gift, love.
- People O come, O come, Emmanuel**
- Presider We pray O God, for those in need around us, for the unsheltered and hungry, for the lost and orphaned, for the battered and bruised, for those who need a tender touch and a healing word.
- People O come, O come, Emmanuel**
- Presider We pray O God for the children of our world, and all those of tender faith. Bless the innocent of the earth and all those who put their trust in you. Bless the humble and the powerless and bring down from their thrones the prideful and those who are indifferent.
- People O come, O come, Emmanuel**
- Presider We pray for those who have died, for those whom death came too early and for those for whom death was a release. We pray for an end to violence that destroys life and creates fear.
- People O come, O come, Emmanuel**
- Presider Come, Lord, come down, come in, come among us. Enter into our darkness with your light. Come fill our emptiness with your presence. Dispel the clouds and reveal your glory. Come refresh, renew, restore us. Come Lord, come down, come in, come among us. **Amen.**

Remain standing or kneeling as desired.

Confession of Sin

Please stand or kneel as you are most comfortable

New Zealand Prayer Book

God has promised forgiveness
as a gift of freedom and grace.
Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Moment of silence observed.

God of all mercy,
**we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives.
We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us
the evil we have done,
and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love
and serve only your will. Amen.**

Absolution

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

The Peace

✧ *“The Peace” is a Christian tradition deriving its roots from Jesus himself who greeted people saying, “Peace be with you.” “The Peace” may feel awkward if you are new or an introvert or trying not to be noticed. We take this portion of our worship seriously as we live in a deeply divided world full of violence. These actions in God’s house model what we are called to do in the world.*

Presider: The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Presider: Invitation to the Great Thanksgiving

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Creator of the Stars of the Night

(for text, see hymn #60)

The Great Thanksgiving

Please stand, as able.

Eucharistic Prayer 2, EOW page 60

Sing

Presider *Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below.
Praise God above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. A-men.*

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: We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready the creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing. You made us in your image, and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away; and yet, as a good mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love.

And so this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we sing:

Ho - ly, ho - ly,

ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho-san-na in the

high - est. Bless - ed is he who

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

Music: William Mathias (1934-1992). Copyright © 1976 Oxford University Press.

Please stand or kneel as you are able

Presider *continues*

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God. To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love. Then, when the time came, he gave himself up to death and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.” As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said: “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice.

Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new creation, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made.

In the fullness of time bring us, with our Patron Paul and all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

**Our father in heaven
hallowed be your Name,
Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in Heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil,
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. AMEN.**

The Breaking of the Bread

Fraction

Eat This Bread Taizé

(Sing 2 times)

Eat this bread, drink this cup:

Come to me and never be hungry.

Eat this bread, drink this cup;

Trust in me and you will not thirst.

The Invitation to Communion

Presider: The gifts of God for the people of God...

God's holy food for God's holy people.

This is the table of the Lord. It is made ready for those who love him and who want to love him more. So come, you who have much faith and you have little, you who have been here often and you have not been here long, you who have tried to follow and you who have failed. Come, for it is the Lord who invites you.

You will now have three ways to receive communion:

In one kind--this means you receive only the bread or only the wine. Receive the bread by extending your hands, palm upward, when the presider comes to you and then leaving the rail or crossing your hands over your chest when the chalice comes to you.

To receive the wine only, cross your hands when the bread is presented and then drink from the chalice by gently assisting the chalice bearer by grasping the base of the chalice lightly to help guide it to your lips.

Intinction (having the bread dipped in the wine and placed in your hand) is only done by the presider from the intinction tray. To receive communion by intinction simply keep your hands down by your sides as we have been doing. Then raise them to take intincted bread between thumb and forefinger.

In two kinds--this is where you consume both the bread and the wine either by receiving the bread and then drinking from the chalice or by Intinction.

There is no intinction by multiple individuals from the chalice.

Gluten free wafers available upon request.

Please stand or kneel as desired.

Post Communion Prayer

Presider Let us pray,

Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, God, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

The Blessing

Go from here with confidence and hope.

Strengthen those who are tired and exhausted;

comfort those who are anxious and fearful.

Say to them all:

“Be strong, and do not fear!

For God is coming—

Indeed, God is already here!

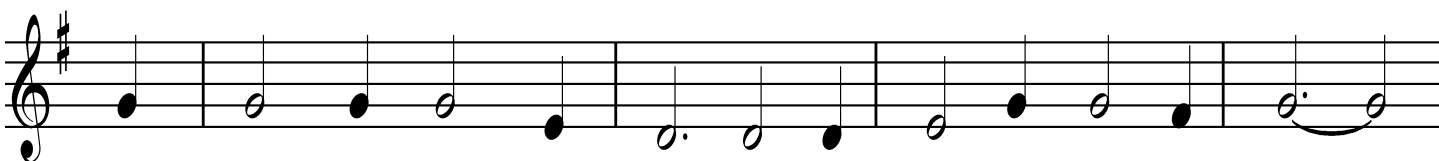
And may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be among this day and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Please rise as comfortable.

Recessional Hymn #65 Prepare the Way, O Zion



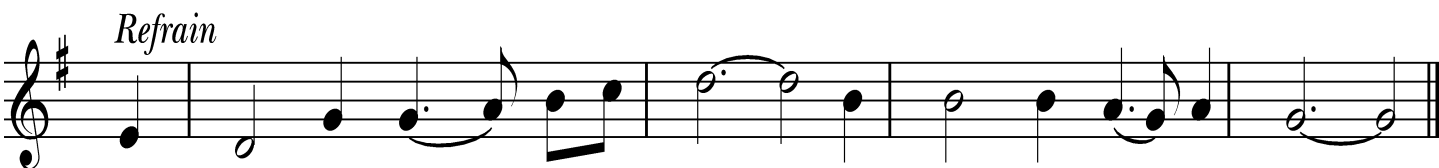
- 1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!
2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.
3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sa - vior's rule em - brace.



Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.
His rule is peace and free - dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.
His tid - ings of sal - va - tion pro - claim in ev - ery place.



Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.
Lift high your praise re - sound - ing, for grace and joy a - bound - ing.
All lands will bow be - fore him, their voic - es will a - dore him.



Oh, blest is Christ that came in God's most ho - ly name.

Words: Frans Mikael Franzen (1772-1847); tr. composite; adapt. Charles P. Price (1920-1999). Copyright © 1982, Charles P. Price. Music: *Bereden väg för Herran*, melody from *Then Svenska Psalmboken*, 1697; harm. *Koralbok för Svenska Kyrkan*, 1939, alt.

The Dismissal

Presider: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia!

People: Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Postlude

Fantasy in G Major

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

***Please note that neither Mother Stephanie nor St. Paul's will ever send out an e-mail or text communication requesting money, gift cards, etc. If you receive any suspicious communications like this, please ignore and delete these communications. Contact the Parish Office at any time with questions or concerns regarding possible scams. ***

PRAYER LIST

Please remember in your prayers: All who are ill or unemployed and those who are on our prayer list.

Short-term

Jamie Tate, Rose Andrews, Rosie Carlton's family

Long-term

Cade Gibbs, Ray Call, Steve Jackson, Ken Asel, Shane Jenkins, Kaye Hall, Dot Beamon, Da'Shon Horton

Armed Forces

Let us pray for the safety of **all our troops**, especially John Craine, Micha Duerk, Faith Lankford, Cole Griffith, Zach Necessary, Jason Westmeyer, and all others who serve throughout the world.

Prayer requests can be submitted through the prayer request form by scanning the QR code below, or by contacting the office.





December 8th—Ryan Minick

December 9th—Rachel Canter

December 10th—Colleen Manolovich

December 10th—Donald Bishop

December 13th—Philip Stone

No anniversaries this week.



Serving Today

Altar Guild: Mike Southwell, Mary Southwell

Reader: Mary Southwell

Acolytes: David Shupe, Linda Schneider

Usher: David McNeill

Bread Bakers: Mark Williams & Ben Staley

Vestry Lock-Up for December: Julie Koch



The Rt. Rev José McLoughlin
Bishop of the Diocese of Western North Carolina

St. Paul's Vestry 2025

Jeff Beard

Chuck Forester, Jr. Warden

Ruth Harris

Julie Koch

Scott Jessee, Sr. Warden

Tana Myers

Diane Peabody

Bill Harris, *Secretary*
Drew Mayberry, *Treasurer*
The Rev. Stephanie E. Parker, *Rector*
rector@stpaulwilkesboro.org
Russell Stinson, *Director of Music*
Penny Farmer, *Finance Administrator*
Robyn Setzer, *Parish Administrator*