

**ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND SCHOOL
& AFRICAN PALMS USA**

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Sunday, December 21, 2025

8am & 10:30am

HOLY EUCHARIST



3427 Olney Laytonsville Rd. Olney, MD 20832
Phone: (301) 774-6999 | Website: www.stjec.org

~ CALLED BY CHRIST IN LOVE, TO LIVE IN TRUTH AND ACTION ~

Welcome to St. John's Church

We are a diverse faith community committed to carrying out Christ's mission in the world around us. We love the beauty of worship, and live into the faithful and constant commitment towards seeking social and economic justice and reconciliation among all peoples. We come from across the globe, with varied family configurations, educational backgrounds, occupations, interests, and talents and invite you to join us.

If you are visiting our church for the first time, please introduce yourself to an usher or a member of the Clergy. We have a small gift for you from the parish.

If you are seeking a spiritual home, please speak with the Clergy.



Please join us for Coffee and fellowship following the worship service

If you are a guest with us today, please know that you are welcome to enjoy fellowship, coffee, and tea with us in the Parish Hall following the service.

Children are welcome at all services

If you have little worshipers with you today who might enjoy coloring, Play-Doh, or a Rubik's cube, these can be found at either entrance.

The Nursery is open from 8am to 12pm for children age 5 and under.

SUNDAY @ ST. JOHN'S

8am	<i>Worship with Eucharist, no music, in the Sanctuary</i>
9am	<i>Adult Forum in the undercroft Meeting Room</i>
9:45am	<i>Holy Household Half-Hour, Intergenerational "Sunday school" in the Parish Hall</i>
10:30am	<i>Worship with Eucharist and choir in the Sanctuary</i>

COME JOIN US



Christmas at ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

~ Christmas Eve Services ~
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

10:30 AM
Family interactive Service

*

7:00 PM
Choral Eucharist

*

10:00 PM
Choral Eucharist

~ Christmas Day ~
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25

9:00 AM
Eucharist

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

8:00 & 10:30 AM
Morning Prayer

*

~ Feast of the Epiphany ~
SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

5:00 PM
Service of Light
&
Christmas Pageant
followed by a
Spaghetti Dinner



Joy to the world



HOLY EUCHARIST

10:30AM

Prelude

The people stand.

10:30AM

Hymn #56

Come, o come Emmanuel (vs 1-4)



(Dec. 23) 1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som
(Dec. 17) 2 O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest
(Dec. 18) 3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy
(Dec. 19) 4 O come, thou Branch of Jes - se's tree, free them from
(Dec. 20) 5 O come, thou Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen
(Dec. 21) 6 O come, thou Day - spring from on high, and cheer us
(Dec. 22) 7 O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind in one the
(Dec. 23) 8 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som



1 cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile
2 all things might - i - ly; to us the path of know - ledge
3 tribes on Si - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the
4 Sa - tan's ty - ran - ny that trust thy might - y power to
5 wide our heaven - ly home; make safe the way that leads on
6 by thy draw - ing nigh; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of
7 hearts of all man - kind; bid thou our sad di - vi - sions
8 cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile



1 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 2 show, and teach us in her ways to go.
 3 law, in cloud, and ma - jes - ty, and awe.
 4 save, and give them vic - tory o'er the grave. Re - joice! Re - joice!
 5 high, and close the path to mis - er - y.
 6 night, and death's dark shad - ow put to flight.
 7 cease, and be thy - self our King of Peace.
 8 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.



Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

The stanzas may be used as antiphons with "The Song of Mary" on the dates given.

Words: Latin, ca. 9th cent.; ver. *Hymnal* 1940, alt. Copyright © The Church Pension Fund. Music: *Veni, veni, Emmanuel*, plainsong, Mode 1, Processionale, 15th cent.; adapt. Thomas Helmore (1811-1890); acc. Richard Proulx (b. 1937).

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

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

THE COLLECT FOR PURITY

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

10:30AM

Wait for the Lord

Ostinato Chorale

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart!

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

People

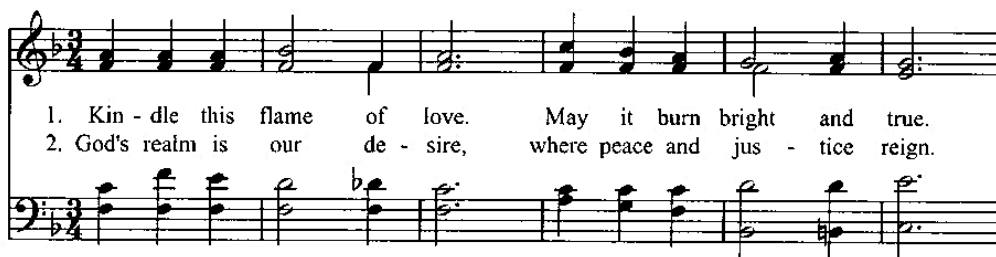
And also with you.

Let us pray.

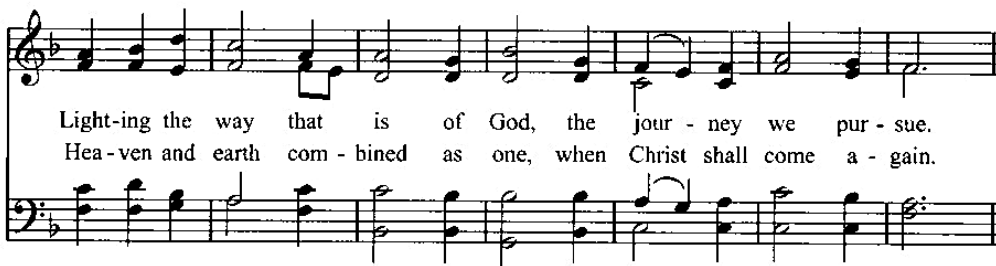
Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Advent candle is lit.

10:30AM



1. Kin - dle this flame of love. May it burn bright and true.
2. God's realm is our de - sire, where peace and jus - tice reign.



Light-ing the way that is of God, the jour - ney we pur - sue.
Hea - ven and earth com - bined as one, when Christ shall come a - gain.

WORDS: Gary L. Lake Dillensnyder, 2009

MUSIC: Robert Jackson, 1888

TRENTHAM
SM

Kneel as you are able.

Heavenly Father, you call us to repent of our sins: soften our proud and stubborn hearts. Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you declared the forgiveness of God: teach us to forgive one another. Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Holy Spirit, you search our hearts and show us the truth: direct us in your way of righteousness. Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed, forgive you your sins, open your eyes to God's truth, strengthen you to do God's will, and give you the joy of his kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The people are seated.

Isaiah 7:10-16

Lector A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

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.

People

Thanks be to God.

Psalms 80:1-7, 16-18

- 1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
- 2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
stir up your strength and come to help us.
- 3 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 4 O LORD God of hosts, *
how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?
- 5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- 6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- 7 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 16 Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.
- 17 And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.
- 18 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Romans 1:1-7

Lector A reading from Saint Paul's letter to the church in Rome.

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.**

The people stand.

Hymn #265

The angel Gabriel from heaven came

1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from hea - ven came,
2 "For know a bless - ed Mo - ther thou shalt be,
3 Then gen - tle Ma - ry meek - ly bowed her head,
4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born

his wings as drift - ed snow, his eyes as flame;
all gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee,
“To me be as it pleas - eth God,” she said,
in Beth - le - hem, all on a Christ - mas morn,

“All hail,” said he, “thou low - ly maid - en Ma - ry,
thy Son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,
“my soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy his ho - ly Name.”
and Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say—

most high - ly fa - vored la - dy,” Glo - ri - a!
most high - ly fa - vored la - dy,” Glo - ri - a!
Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy, Glo - ri - a!
“Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy,” Glo - ri - a!

Words: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924) Music: *Gabriel's Message*, Basque carol; harm. Edgar Pettman (1865-1943) Copyright ©1961, B. Feldman and Co. Ltd., trading as H. Freeman & Co. Reproduced by permission of EMI Music Publishing Ltd., (London). All rights reserved. Used with permission.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew (1:18-25)

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ**

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.

People The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, Lord Christ

THE SERMON

The Rev. Shivaun Wilkinson

The people stand.

The Nicene Creed

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 man.

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.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Deacon God calls us to love one another. As a sign of that love, let us lift up our prayer to God for the needs of all people throughout the world, saying: O God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for the peace of the world, that our instruments of war may be transformed into instruments of peace, and that nations shall cease to learn war any more.

People **O God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for the church, that we may become more and more a means of grace and peace in the world.

People **O God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all people of good will who seek to cast off the works of darkness, that we may be enlightened through our service of others in the name of Christ.

People **O God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are in need especially **Anne, Sara, Sloane, Aurora, Katie, Stephen, Carole, Tom, Ron, Greg, Ivy, Steve, Celeste, and Mary**, that we may be alert to the presence of Christ in them and ready to reach out in love.

People **O God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all the departed, that we may be comforted in knowing they are in the nearer presence of God.

People **O God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for those who are assembled here today, that we may be clothed with the Lord Jesus Christ and go forth from this place to be Christ in the world.

People **O God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who have asked for our prayers, that we may faithfully wait upon God with confidence in that love which sustains us in every moment of our lives.

People **O God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Officiant We praise you, Lord our God, that you have called us to be your people and the instruments of your presence in the world. Grant us grace to discern your will and the strength to do it, through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**



Use the QR code to donate from your mobile device.

Anthem: Savior of the Nations, Come

Smith

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Samuels Wells

During Advent our Eucharistic Prayers will reflect the specific readings for each week. We invite you to listen to, rather than read, the prayers. This will also permit you to focus on the bread and the wine during these prayers. Lift your eyes towards the altar and hear our prayers to God.

The people stand.

People The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

People Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

People Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

The Celebrant continues.

8AM

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

10:30AM

Sanctus 129 Holy, holy, holy

Robert Powell

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and
might, hea - ven 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.

Great is the mystery of faith.
People **Christ has died;
Christ is risen;
Christ will come again.**

The Celebrant continues.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, in the language closest to our hearts, we are bold to say,

**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.**

**Onze Vader, die in de hemel zijt,
uw naam worde geheiligd.
Uw rijk kome,
Uw wil geschiede,
op aarde zoals in de hemel.
Geef ons heden ons dagelijks
brood,
en vergeef ons onze schuld,
zoals ook wij aan anderen hun
schuld vergeven.
En leid ons niet in bekoring,
maar verlos ons van het kwade.
Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept.

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
People **Therefore let us keep the feast.**

10:30AM

Fraction Anthem: My Spirit Yearns for You

Taizé Community



My spir - it yearns for you in the night, O God; I
Ie - de - re nacht ver-lang ik naar u, o God, ik



seek you, O Lord, with all my soul. My spir - it
hun - ker naar u met heel mijn ziel. Ie - de - re



yearns for you in the night, O God; I
nacht ver-lang ik naar u, o God, ik



seek you, O Lord, with all my soul.
hun - ker naar u met heel mijn ziel.

Copyright © 2012 by Les Presses de Taizé.
Published and distributed in North America exclusively by GIA Publications, Inc.

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

The people are seated.

Communion is offered to all who are called by Christ to participate. You can receive in both kinds, bread and wine or in just one. To receive communion, or a blessing, please come forward to the priest at the front of the altar. To receive bread, put your hands out, to receive wine, please drink from the chalice. For health reasons, we do not instinct (dip) the bread. To receive a blessing, cross your arms across your chest. Gluten-free host is available. Please make your needs known to the priest.

Sending Prayers for Eucharistic Visitors

Deacon In the name of God and this congregation, I send you forth bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood.

People **We who are many are one body because we all share one bread and one cup.**

Post Communion Prayer

Celebrant Let us pray.

The people stand.

Celebrant and People

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing

Hymn # 72

Hark! the glad sound

1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
 2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come

prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
 bond - age held. The gates of the grass be -
 soul to cure, and with the trea - sures -
 shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal

pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
 fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
 of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
 arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

Dismissal

People Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

TENDING GOD'S FLOCK

Use this list to pray and to show your love and concern for the sick, shut-in, bereaved, or those merely in need of prayer. If you wish to submit a name please contact the office at accounting@stjec.org.

In case of pastoral emergency, please call 301-774-3619 or email pastoralcare@stjec.org

Anne Elliott

Sara R.

Sloane Lewis

Aurora

Katie Fairbanks

Stephen Simpson

Carole

Tom Dry

Ron Blackburn

Greg Downing

Ivy Choe-Branstetter

Steve Ruff

Celeste McGee

Mary Persinger

If you are ill for an extended period, are hospitalized, need a visit or Eucharist brought to you, want your home blessed, are celebrating a birth, adoption, or want specific prayers for any number of celebrations or sorrows, please email: pastoralcare@stjec.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **PRAYER PARTNERS MILK & COOKIES PJ PARTY**

Join us TODAY from 12-1pm for Advent Cookies, Milk and Eggnog with your prayer partner.

- **GROCERY STORE GIFT CARDS** – So many families in our area are struggling to put food on the table. Grocery store gifts cards (\$50) will be collected for families so that they are able to purchase items for their holiday meals. Gift cards may be placed in the collection plate or given to Deacon Nancy. Gift cards will be collected through **December 24th** - Christmas Eve.

- **KNITTERS & CROCHETERS**

Please consider making mittens, hats, scarfs, and other cold weather items, so that we can put them out on the “Love Your Neighbor” sign for anyone in need to take. Items may be dropped off on the bench outside the Rector’s office so that they can be hung with love outside for those who need them to stay warm.

- **FOOD PANTRY NEEDS**

Food Pantry needs for this week include:

SAINT JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND SCHOOL & AFRICAN PALMS USA

Diocese of Washington

The Most Reverend Sean W. Rowe, *Presiding Bishop*

The Right Reverend Mariann Edgar Budde, *Bishop*

STAFF

The Reverend Henry P. McQueen, *Rector*

rector@stjec.org

The Reverend Shivaun Wilkinson, *Associate Rector*

associate@stjec.org

The Reverend Nancy Stockbridge, *Deacon*

deacon@stjec.org

Tammy Turner, *Parish Administrator*

accounting@stjec.org

Cambria Van de Vaarst, *Minister of Music*

music@stjec.org

Africanpalms@stjec.org

Joe Powers, *Interim Head of School*

Joe.Powers@stjes.org

Eoin Benson, *Sexton*

Selva Selvarajah, *Verger*

VESTRY

Will Lederer, 2026 - *Formation*

Bill Fleming, 2026 - *Sr. Warden*

Mary Kerr, 2026 - *Pastoral Care*

Andrew Hamill - *Treasurer*

Aparna Williams - *Asst. Treasurer*

Julie Metcalf - *Registrar*

Bree Bruemmer, 2027 - *Stewardship*

Carmen Jones, 2027 - *Evangelism*

Becca Roberson, 2027 - *Jr. Warden, Outreach*

Becky Hast, 2028 - *STJES*

Mary Lou McMaster, 2028 - *Worship*

Rob Schellhase, 2028 - *Parish Life*

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

3427 Olney Laytonsville Rd. Olney, MD 20832

(301) 774-6999 - Welcome@stjec.org

~ On the Land of the Piscataway Nation ~