



THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT DECEMBER 14, 2025 10:00 AM

A warm welcome to all who come to worship at St. John's this beautiful day. If you are visiting with us, we would like to get to know you better, so please fill out a visitor's card found in the pew and place in the offering plate.

There is no wrong way to worship. The people's responses are in bold and instructions for sitting, standing, and kneeling are in italics. We invite you to participate in the way that feels most comfortable and authentic to you.

Prelude

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Reader We wait in hope for the LORD;
People **he is our help and our shield.**

The first and second candles of the Advent Wreath are lit.

Reader God of hope, when Christ our Savior appears may he not find us asleep or idle, but active in his service and ready for wisdom. Come, O Emmanuel, you are the way, the truth and the life; Come, living Savior, come to your world, which waits for you. **Amen.**

Reader We wait in hope for the LORD;
People **he is our help and our shield.**

Opening Hymn 57

Lo! he comes, with clouds descending

Sung by all.

Helmsley

The Word of God

Celebrant Blessed are you, holy and living One.

People **You come to your people and set them free.**

Celebrant 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.**

Kyrie

Kyrie Eleison (Lord have mercy)

Sung by choir.

Natalie Sleeth

The Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray. Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever.

People **Amen.**

The people are seated.

The First Lesson

Isaiah 35:1-10

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ²it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.

³Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
“Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.”

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
⁷the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God’s people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
⁹No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

¹⁰And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Canticle 15: The Song of Mary



My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.

Antiphon

He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

Antiphon

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.

Antiphon

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Antiphon

The Second Lesson

James 5:7-10

⁷Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The people stand as able.

Sequence Hymn 66, verses 1 & 2

Come thou long expected Jesus

Sung by all.

Stuttgart

The Gospel

Matthew 11:2-11

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

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

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” ⁴Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord.

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

Sequence Hymn 66, verses 3 & 4

Come thou long expected Jesus

Sung by all.

Stuttgart

The people are seated.

The Sermon

The people stand as able.

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

- Celebrant Sisters and brothers, strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Let us seek the Lord praying, “Let us see your glory, O Lord; *Come to us and save us!*”
- Lector Lord, save your Church from weakness of heart. Give us strength to prepare this world for the coming of your Christ. And give us patience when it seems Christ’s kingdom does not come quickly enough. *Silence.* Let us see your glory, O Lord;
- People Come to us and save us!**
- Lector Lord, save this nation from disordered priorities and misplaced hope. May our values mirror your values. May we be a nation that gives justice to the oppressed, food to the hungry, and care to the stranger. *Silence.* Let us see your glory, O Lord;
- People Come to us and save us!**
- Lector Lord, save your creation from human misuse. Bless us to play a part in the redemption you have planned for all of creation. *Silence.* Let us see your glory, O Lord;
- People Come to us and save us!**
- Lector Lord, save this city from hopelessness. Give us a vision and a future. Raise up prophets who will speak hope and encouragement to the people of our region. *Silence.*
Let us see your glory, O Lord;
- People Come to us and save us!**
- Lector Lord, save the sick and the sorrowful in the midst of their affliction. We pray especially for those on our prayer list and those we name silently or aloud. *Pause.* May they experience the healing work of their Messiah. Make happy all those who have you for their help. *Silence.* Let us see your glory, O Lord;
- People Come to us and save us!**
- Lector Lord, bless all members of your heavenly kingdom. May they obtain eternal joy and gladness in your presence—where sorrow and sighing are no more. *Silence.*
Let us see your glory, O Lord;
- People Come to us and save us!**

The Celebrant adds a concluding collect.

Confession of Sin and Absolution

- Celebrant Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.
The people kneel as able. Silence is kept for reflection.
- Together 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.**
- Celebrant 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

- Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People And also with you.

The people greet one another with a sign of God’s peace and are seated.

The Holy Communion

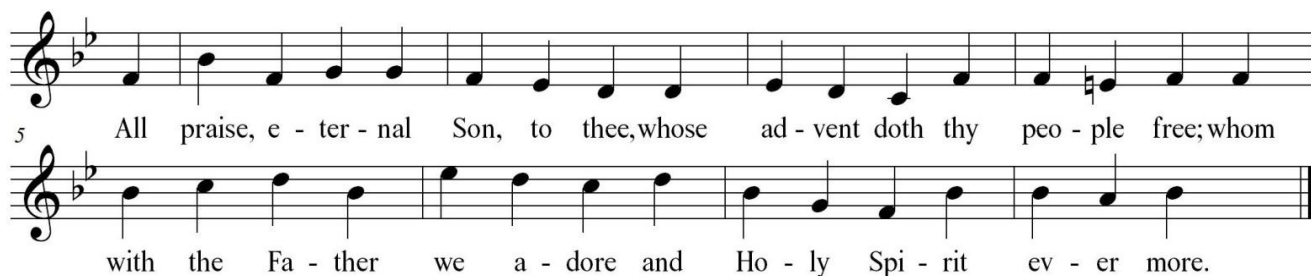
The Offertory

Having listened to the Word of God, affirmed our faith, confessed our sins, and shared in the peace, we now prepare ourselves for the gift of the Holy Communion. At the offertory, we gratefully offer back to God some of what God has given us, both in the bread and wine, and in the money we give. Here at St. John's, it is tradition that people stand as the elements are brought forward and are seated once the bread and wine are on the altar.

Offertory Anthem

Doxology

Sung by all.



The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

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

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Celebrant It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father 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 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. For by water and the Holy Spirit you have made us a new people in Jesus Christ our Lord, to show forth your glory in all the world. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name.

Together



Celebrant 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, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin 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 give 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 for 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, O Father,

Together We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory.

Celebrant 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 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 him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.

People Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Celebrant 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.**

Fraction Anthem

Sung by all.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu ia. Christ our Pass - o - ver

is sac - ri - ficed for us; There - fore let us keep the feast.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia

The Invitation to Holy Communion

The people are seated. Please move at the direction of the ushers. You may receive the bread in open and outstretched hands. Gluten-free wafers are available; please make your need known to the priest. Wine is also available. Intinction (dipping of wafer into the cup of wine) by the congregation is not allowed. If you prefer not to drink from the cup, the priest can dip the wafer for you; simply indicate this desire by placing your palms together. Receiving the bread only is full participation in the Eucharist.

If you prefer to receive a blessing instead, please indicate your choice by crossing your hands across your chest. Those who wish to have Holy Communion brought to them at their seat should notify an usher.

All who seek God and a deeper life in Christ are welcome to receive Holy Communion. While we believe that it is most meaningful when done as a baptized Christian, no one will ever be turned away from God's table.

The Post Communion Prayer

Celebrant Let us pray.

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

The Closing Hymn 59

Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding

Sung by all.

Merton

The Dismissal

The Celebrant dismisses the people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Postlude

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