



# THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT DECEMBER 21, 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, second, third, and fourth 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 71

*Hark! the glad sound*

*Sung by all.*

*Bristol*

## 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. 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.**

*The people are seated.*

## The First Lesson

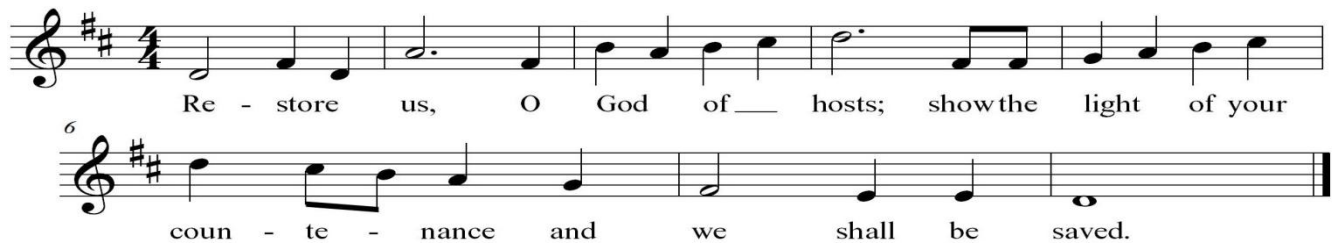
*Isaiah 7:10-16*

<sup>10</sup>Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, <sup>11</sup>Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. <sup>12</sup>But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. <sup>13</sup>Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup>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. <sup>15</sup>He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. <sup>16</sup>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."

Lector The Word of the Lord.

**People Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 80:1-7, 16-17



<sup>1</sup>Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; \*  
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

<sup>2</sup>In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, \*  
stir up your strength and come to help us.

<sup>3</sup>Restore us, O God of hosts; \*  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

<sup>4</sup>O LORD God of hosts, \*  
how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?

<sup>5</sup>You have fed them with the bread of tears; \*  
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

<sup>6</sup>You have made us the derision of our neighbors, \*  
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

<sup>7</sup>Restore us, O God of hosts; \*  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

<sup>16</sup>Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, \*  
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.

<sup>17</sup>And so will we never turn away from you; \*  
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.

**Antiphon**

**Antiphon**

**Antiphon**

## The Second Lesson

*Romans 1:1-7*

<sup>1</sup>Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup>which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, <sup>3</sup>the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh <sup>4</sup>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, <sup>5</sup>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, <sup>6</sup>including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

<sup>7</sup>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.

Lector            The Word of the Lord.

People            **Thanks be to God.**

*The people stand as able.*

## Sequence Hymn 56, verses 1 & 6

*O come, O come Emmanuel*

*Sung by all.*

*Veni, veni Emmanuel*

## The Gospel

*Matthew 1:18-25*

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

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

<sup>18</sup>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. <sup>19</sup>Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly.

<sup>20</sup>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.

<sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup>"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us."<sup>24</sup>When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Celebrant        The Gospel of the Lord.

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

## Sequence Hymn 56, verses 7 & 8

*O come, O come Emmanuel*

*Sung by all.*

*Veni, veni Emmanuel*

*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 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us appeal to the Lord praying, “Restore us, O God of hosts; *Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.*”

Lector We ask you, O God, to bless your Church. Give us your grace. Stir up your strength and come to help us even as we declare the gospel concerning your Son. *Silence.*

Restore us, O God of hosts;

**People Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

Lector We ask you, O God, to bless this nation. May our leaders not trust in their own strength but in you, O God of hosts. Teach us to refuse the evil and choose the good. *Silence.*

Restore us, O God of hosts;

**People Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

Lector We ask you, O God, to bless this planet. By your creative power bring forth new life in the places in which we have reaped too much or sown too little. *Silence.*

Restore us, O God of hosts;

**People Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

Lector We ask you, O God, to bless our city. Let your hand be upon us. Guide and strengthen all those who find themselves in difficult situations—especially young and single parents.

*Silence.* Restore us, O God of hosts;

**People Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

Lector We ask you, O God, to bless all those who are distressed. Hear their prayers, O Shepherd of the flock. May they take comfort in the knowledge that you are with them. We pray especially for those on our prayer list, for our Jewish and Muslim brothers and sisters living in fear, and for those we name silently or aloud. *Silence.* Restore us, O God of hosts;

**People Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

Lector We ask you, O God, to bless all who have died, especially those lost in mass shootings. Welcome into your heavenly kingdom all who are called to be saints. *Silence.*

Restore us, O God of hosts;

**People Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

*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

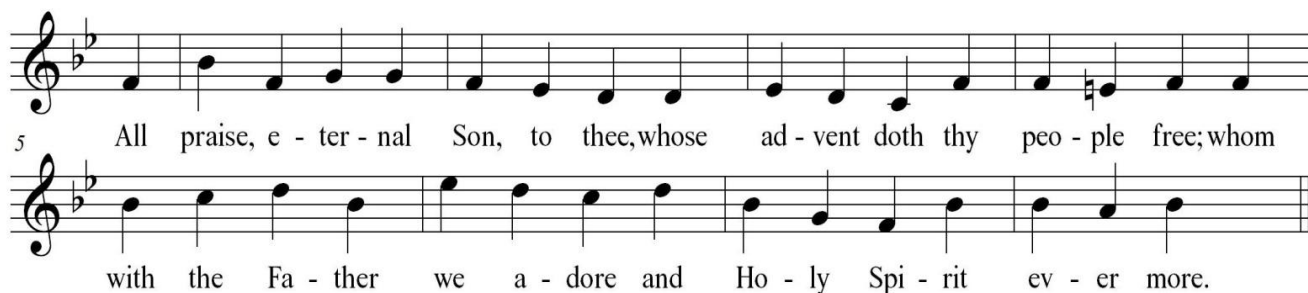
## The Offertory

*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.

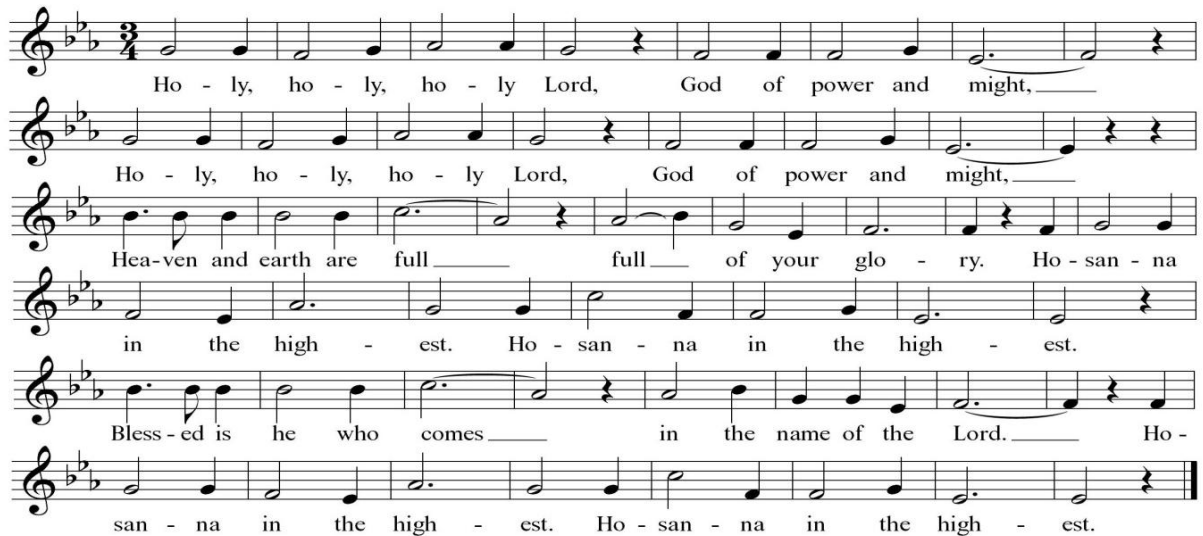
**Celebrant** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**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.*



## 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 (next page)

*Soon and very soon*

*(sing the refrain twice after verse 4)*

*Sung by all.*

1 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.  
 2 No more cry - ing there: we are going to see the King.  
 3 No more dy - ing there: we are going to see the King.  
 4 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.

Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.  
 No more cry - ing there: we are going to see the King.  
 No more dy - ing there: we are going to see the King.  
 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.

Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.  
 No more cry - ing there: we are going to see the King.  
 No more dy - ing there: we are going to see the King.  
 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.

Hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah, we're going to see the King!

## The Dismissal

*The Celebrant dismisses the people.*

**People**      **Thanks be to God.**

## The Postlude

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