

December 20, 2020

9:00 am

## Fourth Sunday of Advent The Holy Eucharist - Rite II



*In this season of Advent, we lovingly and intentionally are utilizing supplemental worship materials from The Episcopal Church's Enriching Our Worship. Let this familiar liturgy with its nuanced language, invite you deeper in your faith, and may the words open space for you to journey closer to Immanuel, God With Us.*

# ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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**The Reverend Jessie Thompson, Priest-in-Charge**  
Rev. Jessie's St. James office hours are on **MONDAYS** and **WEDNESDAYS**.  
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## THE CALL TO WORSHIP

*Celebrant* Blessed are you, holy and living One.  
*People* You come to your people and set them free.

### Canticle 16 The Song of Zechariah *Benedictus Dominus Deus*

Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel,  
you have come to your people and set them free.  
You have raised up for us a mighty Savior,  
born of the house of your servant David.  
Through your holy prophets you promised of old  
to save us from our enemies,  
from the hands of all who hate us,  
To show mercy to our forebears,  
and to remember your holy covenant.  
This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham,  
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,  
Free to worship you without fear,  
holy and righteous before you,  
all the days of our life.  
And you, child, shall be called the prophet  
of the Most High,  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,  
To give God's people knowledge of salvation  
by the forgiveness of their sins.  
In the tender compassion of our God  
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,  
To shine on those who dwell in darkness  
and the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

### The Collect of the Day

*Celebrant* God 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.**

*Please be seated.*

## **The Lighting of the Advent Wreath**



## **THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**

### **A Reading from the Paul's letter to the Romans (16:25-2)**

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith-- to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

*Reader* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

### **Canticle 15**

*Please read responsively:*

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.**

**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.**

**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.**

**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.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

*Please stand for the Gospel.*

*Celebrant* The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Luke  
*People* **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

### **The Gospel: Luke 1:26-38**

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

*Celebrant* The Gospel of the Lord.  
*People* **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

**The Sermon**

**The Reverend Jessie Thompson**

*A Time of Reflection and Silence Follows.*

**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,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and became truly 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.**

**who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified.**

**who 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**

Dear Siblings of the Faith, as we joyfully await the full manifestation of God's reign in Christ, let us pray for the needs of the church and the world.

**O Wisdom**, you come forth from the mouth of the Most High and reach from beginning to end, mightily and sweetly ordering all things. Behold and bless your church, remembering especially our presiding bishop Michael, our bishop Daniel, our priest Jessie, our vestry members, and all of the people and clergy of the global church. Be present in ordering the life of this and every congregation.

**Come and teach us the way of prudence.**

**O Adonai**, God of the Covenant, ruler of the house of Israel, you appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush and on Mount Sinai gave your law. Forgive us when we stray from your guidance and will.

**Come and redeem us for our life together.**

**O Root of Jesse**, you stand as an ensign to humankind; before you rulers will shut their mouths, and nations bow in worship: We pray for your peace and justice in every nation and throughout the world; be present to all whose lives are ravaged by war and strife. Guide the leaders of this and every land into the paths of peace and goodwill.

**Come save us and do not delay.**

**O Key of David**, and scepter of the house of Israel, you open and no one can shut, you shut and no one can open: Guide us in opening the doors of opportunity for the unemployed, for the homeless, for prisoners, and for all who are oppressed; and lead us in closing the doors that lead to poverty, bigotry, and injustice.

**Come and bring the captives out of the prison house.**

**O King of the Nations** and their Desire, you are the cornerstone that makes us one: We lift up all who are suffering and in need, especially those we name now.... [pause] and all others we name out loud or silently....[pause] Tend the sick, give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous and help us minister to them in your love.

**Come and save us whom you have fashioned out of clay.**

**O Dayspring**, radiance of the Light Eternal and Sun of Righteousness: Shine your light on those who have died; remember especially those we now name..., and bring comfort to all those who mourn.

**Come and enlighten all who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.**

**O Emmanuel**, God with us, Expected One and Savior, We give thanks for all the blessings of this life; for all those who today celebrate birthdays and anniversaries; and for the other blessings we now name silently or aloud... [pause] Make each of us ready to receive you into our hearts, to serve you in all whom we meet, and to greet you in the fullness of your glory in the day of your appearing.

***Come and save us, O Lord our God.***

*The Presider concludes with an appropriate collect.*

## **The Confession**

*Celebrant* Let us confess our sins to God.

*Silence may be kept.*

*Celebrant and People*

**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.**

## **The Absolution**

*Celebrant*

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of 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 Christ be always with you.

**People** And also with you.

All greet one another in the name of the Lord. You may greet each other in the comments section of our worship video.

## **Announcements**

# **THE LITURGY OF THE TABLE.**

## **Eucharistic Prayer 2**

*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.

*The Celebrant proceeds*

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 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 say:

*Celebrant and People say together*

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

*The Celebrant 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, the time came for him to complete upon the cross  
the sacrifice of his life,  
and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died for us,  
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 St. John the Evangelist and St. James 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.**

And now, as our Savior  
Christ has taught us,  
we are bold to say,

*People and Celebrant*

**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 Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.*

*Celebrant* We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

***People* We who are many are one body,  
for we all share in the one bread.**

## **The Invitation**

*Celebrant* This is the table, not of the church, but of the Lord  
It is made ready for those who love God  
and for those who want to love God more.  
So come, you who have much faith and you who have little;  
You who have been here often and you who have not been here long;  
You who have tried to follow and you who have failed.  
Come, because it is the Lord who invites you.  
It is God's will that those who want God should meet here.

## The Communion

### The Post-Communion Prayer

*After Communion, the Celebrant says*                      Let us pray.

**All**                      Loving God,  
we give you thanks  
for restoring us in your image  
and nourishing us with spiritual food  
in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.  
Now send us forth  
a people, forgiven, healed, renewed;  
that we may proclaim your love to the world  
and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

### THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

*The Celebrant blesses the people.*

*Celebrant*            *Let us go forth in the name of Christ.*

**People**              **Thanks be to God.**

## A PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

As we sit and ponder our journey through Advent, what part of the journey stayed with you the most? Reach out how you feel most comfortable and share with each other, and pray the prayer included below on Christmas Eve.

Dear Lord,

Like the Magi of old I come to worship you,  
Like the shepherds, I come to see you  
Like Mary, I ponder these things in my heart-  
That you, God, would become a baby born in  
poverty,

Come to rescue us from darkness,  
Come to bring healing to the injured,  
Come to bring justice to the downtrodden,  
Come to reconcile all things to You.

On this Christmas Eve, my prayer is for the hurting,  
the lonely,

The physically sick and those who are sick deep  
within their souls;

I pray that tomorrow morning when we celebrate  
Your birth,

That those of us who are sick and hurting will be  
refreshed anew by Your cleansing love  
That pursued us so far that You emptied Yourself  
and became a child like us.

Amen

*(adapted from a prayer written by Jennifer Murphy)*

## **St. James Episcopal Church Covenant for Regathering**

In response to the current COVID-19 pandemic, I promise, with God's help and to the best of my ability, to abide by the guidelines of the Diocese of Pennsylvania for participation in the life of my congregation according to the regathering phase in which my congregation is authorized to carry out its mission and ministry.

Though we gather to worship in spirit from our homes this Advent season, when we are able to return to our building, we will abide by our Covenant for Regathering.

In fulfillment of the Baptismal Covenant (BCP p. 304-305), I will strive to:

### **Love my neighbor as myself, I will...**

- Wear a mask or scarf over my nose and mouth at all times in church buildings, except momentarily to receive the sacrament or lead worship through an assigned speaking part, and follow public health guidelines for hand sanitizing and disinfecting
- Only attend worship and receive communion if I am non-symptomatic for the COVID-19 virus or any other transmittable disease that could compromise the health of another congregant
- Abstain from attending if doing so would put me at greater risk due to my own health status

### **Respect the dignity of every human being, I will...**

- Make no physical contact with people beyond the members of my own household
- Maintain a six foot or more distance from other members of the congregation
- Respect any requests for distance, masking, cleaning, to ensure the safety and comfort level of others

### **Seek and serve Christ in all people, I will...**

- Trust and support the decisions of both my diocesan and congregational leaders
- Stay connected with others in my community by telephone, video chat, or mail

Many thanks to the Diocese of Maryland for this template.