



St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

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Sunday Bible Study at 9:45 a.m. in the church library
Children's Sunday School at 10:15 a.m. in Cooper Hall
Holy Eucharist at 11:00 a.m.

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 19, 2021

THE FESTIVAL OF ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS

Prelude *Of The Father's Love Begotten* Held

The congregation may remain seated

Introit *Come, Child of Light* Choir

All stand and sing

56 Entrance Hymn (vs. 1-4) *O come, O come, Emmanuel* Veni, veni Emmanuel

A Bidding Prayer

Beloved in Christ, in this season of Advent, let it be our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the Angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem, to see the Babe lying in a manger. Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by his holy Child; and let us look forward to the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs of praise. But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; for the mission and unity of the Church for which he died, and especially in this country and within this town. And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless; the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love. Lastly, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and whom, in this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are one.

The Almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of Angels bring us all. **Amen.**

The Lessons and Carols

The congregation may remain seated during the singing of the carols

The First Lesson Isaiah 60:1-6

read by Jane Hall

Lector A reading from the book of Isaiah: The Lord addresses the holy city of Jerusalem, promising restoration and a glory greater than in the past.

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.
Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.
Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

Lector The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Anthem

Jesus Christ The Apple Tree

Choir

The Second Lesson Jeremiah 31:31-34

read by Jaquelin Perry

Lector A reading from the book of Jeremiah: A new covenant is promised which will be written in our hearts.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the

covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Lector The word of the Lord.

People ***Thanks be to God***

81 Hymn

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming

All sing

The Third Lesson Baruch 4:36 - 5:9

read by Mike Spruill

Lector A reading from the book of Baruch: The Scribe Baruch urges the people to look East because salvation is at hand.

Look towards the east, O Jerusalem,
and see the joy that is coming to you from God.
Look, your children are coming, whom you sent away;
they are coming, gathered from east and west,
at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing in the glory of God.
Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem,
and put on forever the beauty of the glory from God.
Put on the robe of the righteousness that comes from God;
put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting;
for God will show your splendor everywhere under heaven.
For God will give you evermore the name,
"Righteous Peace, Godly Glory."
Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height;
look toward the east,
and see your children gathered from west and east
at the word of the Holy One,
rejoicing that God has remembered them.
For they went out from you on foot,
led away by their enemies;

but God will bring them back to you,
carried in glory, as on a royal throne.
For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be
made low
and the valleys filled up, to make level ground,
so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God.
The woods and every fragrant tree
have shaded Israel at God's command.
For God will lead Israel with joy,
in the light of his glory,
with the mercy and righteousness that come from him.

Lector The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God**

Anthem

The Desert Shall Rejoice

Choir

The Fourth Lesson Isaiah 11:1-10

read by Lucy O. Spruill

Lector A reading from the book of Isaiah: The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon the Holy One.

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.

Lector The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Anthem *Isaiah The Prophet Has Written of Old* *Choir*

The Fifth Lesson Isaiah 64:1-9 *read by Lucy P. Spruill*

Lector A reading from the book of Isaiah: God is called upon to act and to come
among us.

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
 so that the mountains would quake at your presence--
as when fire kindles brushwood
 and the fire causes water to boil--
to make your name known to your adversaries,
 so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
 you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
From ages past no one has heard,
 no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
 who works for those who wait for him.
You meet those who gladly do right,
 those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
 because you hid yourself we transgressed.
We have all become like one who is unclean,
 and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,
 and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.
Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

Lector The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

67 Hymn

Comfort, comfort, ye my people

All sing

The Sixth Lesson Zephaniah 3:14-20

read by Wayland Spruill

Lector A reading from the book of Zephaniah: The Lord will be among us; we are summoned to rejoice and sing.

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.
On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.
The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing
as on a day of festival.
I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.
And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.
At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the LORD.

Lector The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Anthem

Advent Carol

Choir

The Seventh Lesson Isaiah 7:10-16

read by Sally Spruill

Lector A reading from the book of Isaiah: God promises that a child shall be conceived who will be known as "God with us."

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."

Lector The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

115 Hymn

What child is this?

All sing

The Eighth Lesson Micah 5:2-5a

read by Sarah Hunter Spruill

Lector A reading from the book of Micah: The one who is to rule Israel will be born in the village of Bethlehem

You, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
 who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
 one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
 from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time
 when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
 to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD,
 in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
 to the ends of the earth;
and he shall be the one of peace.

Lector The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Congregation please stand

79 Hymn (vs. 1, 2, 3, & 5) O Little Town of Bethlehem *All stand and sing*

The Holy Gospel Luke 1:39-55

Then, all standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads the Gospel, first saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

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

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And Mary said,

 "My soul magnifies the Lord,
 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
 Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

After the Gospel, the Reader says

The Gospel of the Lord.

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

265 Hymn (vs. 1-3) *The angel Gabriel from heaven came*

Gabriel's Message

The Prayers of the People

Form II

In the course of the silence after each bidding, the People offer their own prayers, either silently or aloud.

I ask your prayers for God's people throughout the world; for our Bishops,
Michael and Rob; for this gathering; and for all ministers and people.

Pray for the Church.

Silence

I ask your prayers for peace; for goodwill among nations; and for the well-being of
all people.

Pray for justice and peace.

Silence

I ask your prayers for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, and those in
prison.

Pray for those in any need or trouble.

Silence

I ask your prayers for all who seek God, or a deeper knowledge of him.

Pray that they may find and be found by him.

Silence

I ask your prayers for the departed, especially Janny Remkes.

Pray for those who have died.

Silence

I ask your prayers for **John Tolbert, Bobbie and Rendol Cobb, Julia Credle, Peggy Parker, Riley Raines, Mary Gillam, Rita Hoggard, Beth Bryant, Daniel Perry, Ray Riddick, Steve Wilson, Betty Hayden, and others known to us.**

Silence

I ask your prayers for everyone impacted by the deadly tornadoes.

Silence

I ask your thanksgiving for our diocesan cycle of prayer: Trinity, Chocowinity.

Silence

Praise God for those in every generation in whom Christ has been honored.

Pray that we may have grace to glorify Christ in our own day.

Silence

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

The Deacon or Celebrant then says:

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People

***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.***

The Bishop, when present, or the Priest, stands and says

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 Celebrant says to the people

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.** *(Please stay in your pew.)*

The Holy Communion

Offertory Anthem

When Will The little King Come?

Schram

(Please place your offering in the plate in the narthex as you enter or exit. During the anthem, the altar will be prepared for the Holy Communion.)

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer B

The people remain standing. The Celebrant, whether bishop or priest says

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.**

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

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 of 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.

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:

Celebrant and People

**S 130 Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna in the highest.**

The people stand or kneel. Then the Celebrant continues

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 gave 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 of 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,

Celebrant and People

**We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;**

The Celebrant continues

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 Thomas, Mary and Joseph and 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. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, 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**

The Breaking of the Bread *The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept. Then may be sung or said*

W875 Fraction Anthem

Choir: Be known to us Lord Jesus in the breaking of the bread

All: **Be known to us, Lord Jesus, in the breaking of the bread.**

Choir: The bread which we break, alleluia, Is the communion of the body of Christ.

All: **Be known to us, Lord Jesus, in the breaking of the bread.**

Choir: One body are we, alleluia, for though many we share one bread.

All: **Be known to us, Lord Jesus, in the breaking of the bread.**

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation:

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Ministration of Communion

The bread and the wine will be offered in stations near the chancel steps. After the choir receives communion, the lectern side will receive first. Everyone should use the lectern side of the aisle going to communion; use the pulpit side of the aisle going back to your seat. We are using biodegradable cups for the wine. Please pick up your own cup, step away from the table, and then deposit the cup into the trash can located in the first pew. Please let an usher know if you prefer to have communion brought to you.

Post Communion Prayer

After Communion, all stand and the Celebrant says:

Let us pray.

Celebrant and People:

**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, Father, 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 Bishop when present, or the Priest, may bless the people.

66 Dismissal Hymn ***Come, thou long-expected Jesus*** Stuttgart

*The Deacon, or the Celebrant, dismisses them
People **Thanks be to God.***

Postlude *From Heaven Above* Held

The altar flowers are given to the Glory of God by Gina Rascoe.

The Ministers of the Liturgy

Celebrant: The Rev. Bonnie J. Smith **Organist:** Tom Parker
Prayers of the People: Jane Hall **Acolyte:** Sally Spruill
Altar Guild: Marti Tyler, Agnes Powell, Alice Pittman, and Rosanna Rhea
Hostesses: Cathy Wilson, Nancy Joyner, and Clara Blanchard
Counters: Pat Ivey and Jane Hall **Ushers:** Fen Rascoe and Steve Trowell
Eucharistic Minister: Tra Perry

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you to Lauren Perry, Tra Perry, and Janet Capehart, whose vestry terms are ending. Norman Perry, Clif Smith, and Wayland Spruill were elected to 3-year vestry terms beginning in January.

We need two more people to serve as delegates to diocesan convention February 11 and 12 in Wilmington. Thank you to Wayland Spruill who was elected.

The vestry will meet tomorrow, December 20, at 5:00 p.m.

The Christmas Eve pageant is scheduled at 5:15 p.m. at the outdoor altar.

The Rev. Sonny Browne will celebrate the sacrament of Holy Eucharist at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Roxobel, on Sunday, December 26 at 5:00 p.m.

Monetary donations for church greenery are welcome. They can also be made in memory or in thanksgiving.

Thank you to everyone who has submitted your 2022 pledge. If you have not already done so, please consider prayerfully what God is calling you to give to St. Thomas in 2022. Pledge cards are available in the narthex and on the chest outside Cooper Hall.