# ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



HOLY EUCHARIST: RITE II DECEMBER  $14^{TH}$ , 2025 AT 10:15 A.M.

#### WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

St. John's is an Open and Affirming congregation. In faithfulness to Jesus and His commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves, we invite everyone to celebrate with us in the full life and ministry of the Church. We believe strongly in our mission statement to Grow in God, Act in Service, and Witness in Love.

#### TO THOSE WHO MAY BE NEW OR ARE VISITING

We are so glad you are here! Ushers are stationed at the back of the church and can answer any questions you may have or please ask a neighbor in the next pew. Restrooms can be found on the other side of the Parish Hall. In addition to worship, opportunities for fellowship exist after the service in the Parish Hall. A nursery is available every Sunday for our littlest members next to the restrooms. Thank you for being here!

#### A NOTE ABOUT OUR WORSHIP

Our Rite II service comes from the Book of Common Prayer and is filled with vibrant music, sacred scripture, and the breaking of bread. This service is filled with the joyful sound of children rustling in the pews, anthems sung to the glory of God, and the heartfelt prayers of those gathered. With acolytes and processions, communal singing, and a mission to love and serve our neighbors, this service invites one to participate in the coming of the Kingdom. At St. John's everyone is welcome to the Lord's table.

#### St. John's Annual Giving Campaign

Thank you to those who have joined our Annual Giving Campaign, "Tell out my Soul!" We are part of a holy narrative, and your pledge allows us to live into our sacred story and share that story through worship, formation, and service! 67 people have submitted pledge cards for a total of \$309,350. We are still in need of \$75,000 to balance our 2026 budget. Please help us meet our goal and share the story of God's love this coming year!!!

#### THE WORD OF GOD

#### **WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

If you have an announcement, you would like the clergy to share, please fill out the form on our website or let the office know no later than Thursday.

PRELUDE Prepare the Way O Zion Paul Fey

PROCESSIONAL HYMN Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers HYMNAL 68

#### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Scripture Jesus spoke to the people again, saying, "I am the light of the world.

Whoever follows me won't walk in darkness but will have the light of life".

Prayer As we light the third candle of the Advent Wreath, we give thanks for

your great love in Jesus, your Son. Open our hearts to receive your love

and show us the way to share that love with others. Amen.

Song: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v. 5-6)

O come, O Key of David, come and open wide our heavenly home. Make safe for us the heavenward road and bar the way to death's abode.

# Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O Bright and Morning Star, and bring us comfort from afar! Dispel the shadows of the night and turn our darkness into light. *Refrain* 

OPENING ACCLAMATION (please remain standing as you are able)

BCP 355

Officiant Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

People His mercy endures for ever.

COLLECT FOR PURITY BCP 355

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 Lord, have mercy HYMNAL S-96

#### 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. *Amen*.

THE FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 35:1-10 (please be seated)

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom;

like the crocus it 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.

Strengthen the weak hands,

and make firm the feeble knees.

Say 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."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,

and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

then 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;

the 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.

A 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.

No 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.

And 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.

The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

# **PSALM 146:4-9**



- 4 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! \* whose hope is in the LORD their God;
- 5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; \* who keeps his promise for ever;
- 6 Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, \* and food to those who hunger.
- 7 The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind; \* the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;

8 The LORD loves the righteous; the LORD cares for the stranger; \*
he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.
9 The LORD shall reign for ever, \*

your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

THE EPISTLE: James 5:7-10

People

People

Be 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. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.* 

GRADUAL HYMN

Hark the Glad Sound

Verses 1 & 2 before the Gospel Reading; Verse 3 & 4 after the Gospel Reading

THE HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11 (please remain standing as you are able)

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

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the 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. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." As 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? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' "Truly 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."

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

#### SERMON

# THE NICENE CREED (please rise in body or spirit)

**BCP 358** 

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. (pause) 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.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord, saying, "Lord, have mercy."

For the holy Church of God, that it may be filled with truth and love, and be found without fault at the day of your coming, we pray to you, O Lord. *Lord, have mercy.* 

For Sean, our Presiding Bishop, for Audrey, our own Bishop, for all bishops and other ministers, and for all the holy people of God, we pray to you, O Lord. *Lord, have mercy*.

For all who fear God and believe in you, Lord Christ, that our divisions may cease, and that all may be one as you and the Father are one, we pray to you, O Lord. *Lord, have mercy.* 

For the mission of the Church, that in faithful witness it may preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth, for St. James, Lancaster; The Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil; and Grace Church, Allentown, our sibling parish, we pray to you, O Lord. *Lord, have mercy.* 

For the peace of the world, that a spirit of respect and forbearance may grow among nations and peoples, we pray to you, O Lord. *Lord, have mercy.* 

For those in positions of public trust especially Donald, our president; Josh, our governor; Danene, our mayor; and those serving in the Armed Forces, that they may serve justice, and promote the dignity and freedom of every person, we pray to you, O Lord. *Lord, have mercy*.

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer; for refugees, prisoners, and all who are in danger; that they may be relieved and protected, we pray to you, O Lord. *Lord, have mercy*.

For this congregation, for those who are present, and for those who are absent, especially Ellen Keller, Nancy Nemith, Ricky Smith, Joanna Sweeney, Al Kuser, Mary Sue Farmer, Ellen Sellers, Edith Kane, Merle Schnee, Sandy Grove, Peggy Zuke, Peggy Buscher, and Teresa Sullivan, that we may be delivered from hardness of heart, and show forth your glory in all that we do, we pray to you, O Lord. *Lord, have mercy.* 

For all who have commended themselves to our prayers; for our families, friends, and neighbors especially Ella, Kevin, Judy Modene, Andrew Gilpin, Cheryl and Rhoda, Ted Griswold, Collin, Eileen Waite, Denise Chandler, Shirley Parmer, Ann Marie, Karlah Gibbs, Kathy Dodge and family, Sandy Patrone, Marshall, Leslie Tahsler, Marianne, Elly, Steve; Heidi, Danny and Kenneth; Ginny, Norma, Ibrahim, and Garth that being freed from anxiety, they may live in joy, peace, and health, we pray to you, O Lord. *Lord, have mercy*.

For all who have died in the communion of your Church, and those whose faith is known to you alone, that, with all the saints, they may have rest in that place where there is no pain or grief, but life eternal, we pray to you, O Lord. *Lord, have mercy*.

Rejoicing in the fellowship of the ever-blessed Virgin Mary, St. John and all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life to Christ our God. *To you, O Lord our God.* 

Officiant For yours is the majesty, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; yours is the

kingdom and the power and the glory, now and for ever. Amen.

#### **CONFESSION OF SIN**

Celebrant Let us confess our sins to God and our neighbor.

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.

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 the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

**THE OFFERTORY** People Look East Traditional Bensancon Carol

PRESENTATION HYMN All praise, eternal Son, to thee HYMNAL 76, vs. 5

Whose advent doth thy people free; Whom with the Father we adore And Holy Spirit evermore

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING: Eucharistic Prayer B

BCP 367

CelebrantThe Lord be with you.PeopleAnd also with you.CelebrantLift up your hearts.PeopleWe lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and every-where 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:

THE SANCTUS

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.

It is customary to kneel during Advent.

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,

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

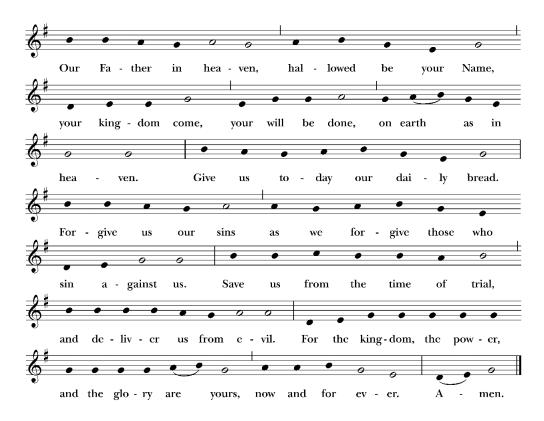
And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

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 St. John 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.** 

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

HYMNAL S-149



#### THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

**BCP 364** 

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

#### **ADMINISTRATION OF COMMUNION**

The Episcopal Church invites all who seek God to our Lord's table. If you wish to receive, please come forward to the altar rail when the usher indicates. Hold out your hands to receive the bread. For the wine, you can receive by guiding the chalice to your lips or by dipping your wafer into the separate intinction cup. If you do not wish to receive the wine, cross your arms over your chest when the wine passes. If you desire a blessing instead of communion, simply cross your arms over your chest. When finished, please exit to your right. Gluten free wafers are also available.

**COMMUNION HYMNS** 

Blessed Be the God of Israel The Lord Will Come and Not Be Slow HYMNAL 444 HYMNAL 462

#### SENDING FORTH OF THE EUCHARISTIC VISITORS

In the name of God and on behalf of this parish, I send you forth bearing Celebrant

these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us in the

communion of Christ's body and blood.

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

#### POST COMMUNION PRAYER

**BCP 365** 

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

May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding

HYMNAL 59

#### A PRAYER ATTRIBUTED TO ST. FRANCIS

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is discord, union;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. *Amen*.

#### THE DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Celebrant

Thanks be to God. People

**POSTLUDE** Lo! He Comes With Clouds Descending Paul Fey

#### St. John's Traveler Letter:

Did you know St. John's has pilgrims who travel the very places we pray for in the Anglican communion? Follow John as he shares about the church and the places he visits:

Dear Pastors Amanda and Joe,

Feliz Advento - Happy Advent from the beaches of Brazil. If you're picturing hot sun, swimsuits and Santa hats you wouldn't be wrong. It's 86 degrees, so no cute or ugly Christmas sweaters! When Papai Noel arrives in a couple of weeks he'll change from his North Pole fleece and velvet to a red silk suit.

Brazil is primarily Catholic, and the Episcopal churches here share many traditions such as Missa do Galo. The midnight worship service translates to Rooster Mass, as it's roosters who announce the start of a new day. The establishment of the Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil - Ingreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil (IEAB) is as much a story of American missionary work as what we've seen to be the historic British evangelism. The beautiful country and people of Brazil first fell to European colonization under Portugal. While Spanish is a common language in much of what we call Central and South America, Portuguese is the primary language here, and those early explorers brought their Roman Catholic faith and traditions as well. The government they established banned other faiths from worshipping until Portugal and England signed a Treaty of Commerce and Navigation in 1810, when the Anglican Church was allowed to conduct services, but only for Anglicans living here. Brazil's independence was recognized in 1825, and in 1889 they finally decriminalized the conversion of Catholics to Anglicans. It was during the mid to late 1800's that several missionaries travelled from America to Brazil, including two prominent priests from Amanda's alma mater Virginia Theological Seminary: Lucien Lee Kinsolving and James Watson Morris. Where by rule of the Catholic Church Anglican services could only be offered in English, in 1890 Kinsolving and Morris celebrated the first Episcopal eucharist in Portuguese. I imagine that just as it would be strange explaining Papai Noel from the wintry North Pole to people who have never seen snow, it was now more relatable to worship in their own long - established language.

Whatever the language, weather, and location, people are in full Advent mode, anticipating the coming Christmas. Blessings to you.

-- John Traveler.

P.S. People here are also excited about the Americas hosting the World Cup, and are already planning to cheer for the gold and green in Philadelphia next June. Maybe you'll see some of them there!

#### THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S:

# **TODAY**

Coffee Hour to follow each service 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist: Rite I

9:15 AM Sunday School

10:15 AM Holy Eucharist: Rite II 1:00 PM Education for Ministry 4:00 PM Emma's Ordination!

# **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16**

1:30 PM Martha's Ministry

2:30 PM Food Pantry

5:00 PM Immigration Clinic

# WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17

12:00 PM Healing Service 2:00 PM Bible Study 5:30 PM Advent Forum

7:00 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

# **THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18**

9:00 AM Ministers' Meeting

2:30 PM Food Pantry

7:00 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal

# FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19

Rector's Day Off

# SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20

9:00 AM Community Breakfast

# **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21**

Coffee Hour to follow each service

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist: Rite I 9:15 AM Sunday School

10:15 AM Holy Eucharist: Rite II

12:00 PM Vestry Meeting

1:30 PM Education for Ministry

# ADVENT FORUM – WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17 AT 5:30 PM

As we seek new ways to explore what it means for us as Christians that God chose to live among us, we invite you to participate in a book study with us this Advent season. We will meet at 5:30 p.m. on December 10 and December 17 to discuss The First Christmas: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus's Birth by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan.

We will discuss the first half of the book (through chapter 5) on December 10, and the remainder on December 17. Dinner will take place from 5:30-6 p.m. with our conversation following from 6-7 p.m. Books can be purchased at your favorite bookstore or on Amazon.

# ORDINATION OF EMMA DI PACE TO THE SACRED ORDER OF DEACONS

By the Grace of God, The Right Reverend Audrey C. Scanlan, XI Bishop of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania, will ordain Emma Rose Di Pace To The Sacred Order of Deacons.

Date: Sunday, December 14, 2025

**Time:** 4:00pm

Location: St. Stephen's Cathedral: 221 N.

Front Street, Harrisburg

Your prayers and presence are requested! Clergy are invited to vest and process (rose or white!!). Reception will follow. Please let us know if you plan on attending by emailing office@stjohns-lancaster.org

#### WELCOME

Welcome to St. John's Episcopal Church! We are glad you are here. Please tell us a little bit about yourself by filling out a pew card and placing it in the offertory plate.

#### **OUR MINISTERS**

All Baptized Members

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Audrey C. Scanlan, Diocesan Bishop

The Rev. Amanda Knouse, Rector amanda@stjohns-lancaster.org

The Rev. Dr. Joe Pritchett, Assistant Rector joe@stjohns-lancaster.org

#### VESTRY

Drew Dorgan (Sr. Warden), Charles Wear (Treasurer), Ted Loose (Jr. Warden), Molly Moyer (Secretary), Liz West, Kathy Kyper, Gretchen Walden, Penn Glazier, Mary Huber, Bruce Waskowicz, Sarah Jones

#### **DELEGATES REPRESENTING ST. JOHN'S AT DIOCESAN CONVENTION**

Pam Loose, Br. David Rutledge, Joe Way, Drew Dorgan

#### STAFF

Mark Herr, Minister of Music (music@stjohns-lancaster.org)
Dana Sanborn, Bookkeeper (finance@stjohns-lancaster.org)
John Knouse, Property Manager (property@stjohns-lancaster.org)
Jessica Morales, Communications Director (jessica@stjohns-lancaster.org)
Stephanie Cabrera, Custodian
Danielle Hill, Nursery Attendant

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