

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



HOLY EUCHARIST: RITE II
DECEMBER 21, 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 \$309,305. 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

Gather Us In

Marty Haugen

OPENING HYMN

*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus
(Sung to the melody, Alleluia, sing to Jesus)*

HYMNAL 66

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Scripture My eyes have seen your salvation. You prepared this salvation in the presence of all peoples. It is a light for revelation to the Gentiles and a glory for your people Israel. – Luke 2:30-32

Prayer As we light all four candles of the Advent Wreath, we give thanks for your great love in Jesus, your Son. Help us to make room in our hearts for your love and live in our bodies, minds, and spirits. *Amen.*

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v. 7)

O come, O King of nations, bind
in one the hearts of all mankind.
Bid all our sad divisions cease
and be yourself our King of Peace.

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

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.*

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 FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 7:10-16 (*please be seated*)

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.”

The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

PSALM 80:1-7,16-18

- 1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
- 2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
stir up your strength and come to help us.
- 3 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 4 O LORD God of hosts, *
how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?
- 5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

- 6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- 7 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 16 Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.
- 17 And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.
- 18 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

THE EPISTLE: Romans 1:1-7

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh 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, 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, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, 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.

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

GRADUAL HYMN *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* **HYMNAL 81**
(Sing vs. 1 & 2 before the Gospel Reading; vs. 3 after the Gospel Reading)

THE HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25 *(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.*

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. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. 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. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

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

SERMON

THE REV. EMMA DI PACE

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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (*please kneel as you are able*)

FORM V

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. John's, Lancaster; The Anglican Church of Burundi; 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, the president; Josh, the governor; Danene, the 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 & Rhoda, Ted Griswold, Collin, Eileen Waite, Denise Chandler, Ann Marie, Karlah Gibbs, Kathy Dodge & family, Sandy Patrone, Marshall, Leslie Tahsler, Marianne, Elly, Steve; Heidi, Danny & Kenneth; Ginny, Norma, Ibrahim, Garth, Gladys Engle, Holly, Alex, 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 *Seinn Ailelu* Arr. by Ian Callanan

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**

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 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* **HYMNAL S-130**
 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.

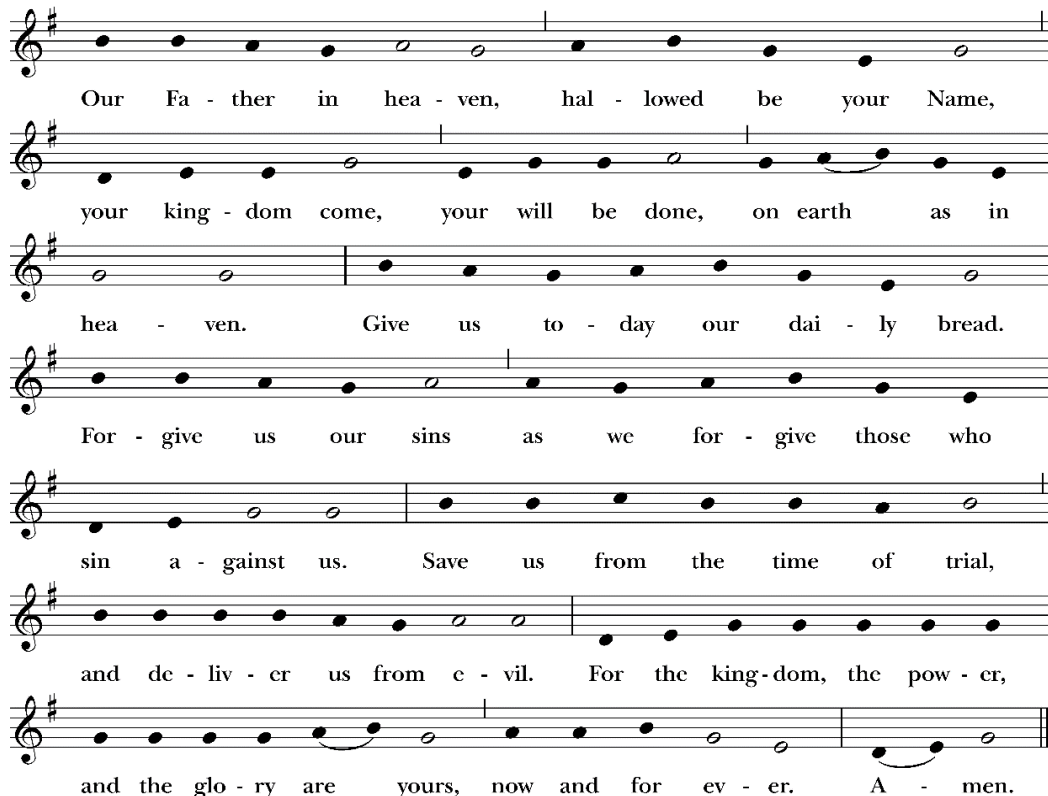
We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put 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

HYMNAL S-149

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



Our Fa - ther in hea - ven, hal - lowed be your Name,
 your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in
 hea - ven. Give us to - day our dai - ly bread.
 For - give us our sins as we for - give those who
 sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of trial,
 and de - liv - er us from c - vil. For the king - dom, the pow - er,
 and the glo - ry are yours, now and for ev - er. A - men.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

BCP 364

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

THE 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.

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	<i>Gift of Finest Wheat</i>	Robert Kreutz
	<i>O Come, Divine Messiah</i>	French Carol, 16th Century

SENDING FORTH OF THE EUCHARISTIC VISITORS

Celebrant In the name of God and on behalf of this parish, I send you forth bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood.
People We, who are many, are one body because we all share one bread, one cup.

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

The King Shall Come

HYMNAL 73

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

Celebrant Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People *Thanks be to God.*

POSTLUDE

The King Of Glory

Israeli folk melody
refrain by Willard F Jabusch

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,

Amahoro! Peace to you from our Anglican friends of Bujumbura. This is the largest city, the economic center, and the former capital of the central African country of Burundi. Geographically it sits on the northeastern shore of Lake Tanganyika, which is the second deepest freshwater lake in the world. It's larger than Lake Erie. Bujumbura is a major port for shipment of goods and resources around this part of Africa, although materials from Burundi have to travel across neighboring lands to reach the ocean.

In addition to Happy Advent I should also add: Happy Solstice for Dec 21. As I'm south of the equator, this is actually the Summer Solstice here. However, as I'm only a little bit south of the equator there isn't much difference. While this is the longest day of daylight of the year, here it's only about 20 minutes longer than the shortest day of daylight. If you like consistency, this is the place for you.

The Anglican Church of Burundi established the Bujumbura Christian University eleven years ago, to train and raise a new generation of leaders for Christian ministry. The history of ministry in this area has an interesting story. You may have heard the quote, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume." A little south of here is the Livingstone - Stanley Monument, with the questionable reputation as being the site where Henry Morton Stanley first encountered Dr. David Livingstone after he had been lost or at least not heard from for six years. Livingstone was a Scottish doctor, explorer, and missionary searching for the origin point of the great Nile River. Lost or not, his notoriety led people back home to listen to his stories as he championed the cause of ending Europe's African slave trade.

Burundi is considered one of the poorest of all countries, and yet there are people here working to make the world a better place. This fourth Sunday of Advent please hold our friends up in prayer, that even though we're on opposite sides of the world, and in opposite climates, we can all celebrate the coming Christmas with Amahoro.

Blessings to you always,
John Traveler



Christmas at St. John's

Christmas Eve

3:30 P.M.

A family celebration of Holy Eucharist with
the annual Christmas pageant and carols

9:30 P.M.

Prelude of Carols with Brass

A festive candlelight Holy Eucharist with
Christmas carols led by the Chancel Choir

Christmas Morning

10:00 A.M.

Join us in person on Christmas Morning to
celebrate "God with us!" Our service will
include Holy Eucharist, scripture, and hymns

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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