

***THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
PRAYER SERVICE***



December 13, 2020
"Enriching Our Worship"

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS AND ASCENSION
Northwoods, MO

During the season of Advent, we are called to seek the light of Christ, even in the midst of darkness. Advent invites us to face the darkness within our own lives and in the world around us. The prophets assure us that the darkness will not overcome us. We are called to watch for the light with hope, faith, trust and joy. May the Spirit of God shine within our hearts so that we might be light for others.

Lighting of our Advent Wreath

Worship Leader

Today we relight the candles of HOPE and PEACE.

[Here relight the first and second Advent candles.]

Listen now, to the words of the prophet Isaiah: “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.”
(Isaiah 35: 10)

Let us now light the third candle. This is the candle of JOY.

[Here light the third Advent candle.]

As the coming of Christ our Savior draws nearer, our joy builds with anticipation.

pause

Celebrant: Our King and Savior now draws near:

All: Come let us adore him.

Celebrant: Lord, grant us your light,

All: That being rid of the darkness of our hearts, we may come to the true light which is Christ.

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Led by Adrienne Dillon

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.*

Refrain-

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

*O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the law, in cloud, and majesty, and awe.*

Refrain-

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

*O come, thou Branch of Jesse's tree, free them from Satan's tyranny
That trust thy mighty power to save, and give them victory o'er the grave.*

Refrain-

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

Opening Acclamation

Celebrant Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

People **Glory to God for ever and ever. Amen.**

Collect for Purity

Celebrant Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the
inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily
magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Song of Praise

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**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Celebrant God is with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

Collect of the Day

Celebrant 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.**

First Reading

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,

to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

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

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 126

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- 1 When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, *
 then were we like those who dream.
- 2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
 and our tongue with shouts of joy.
- 3 Then they said among the nations, *
 "The LORD has done great things for them."
- 4 The LORD has done great things for us, *
 and we are glad indeed.
- 5 Restore our fortunes, O LORD, *
 like the watercourses of the Negev.
- 6 Those who sowed with tears *
 will reap with songs of joy.
- 7 Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
 will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

A Reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

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

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Gospel

John 1:6-8, 19-28

The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to John.

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

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

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

Sermon

The Rev. Renee L. Fenner

The Nicene Creed

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**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,**

**God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of the People Form VI BCP page 392

The Leader and People pray responsively

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

Silence

For all people in their daily life and work;
For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.

For this community, the nation, and the world;
For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation;
For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;
For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;
For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

For Michael our Presiding Bishop, Deon our Bishop, and Renee our Priest. We pray for our Diocese of Missouri, and for the people and ministry of Grace Episcopal Church, Jefferson City. We pray for Bill, their interim priest; Paula their Deacon; and Howard, their assisting Priest. We also pray for the Diocese of Lui; and for all bishops and other ministers;
For all who serve God in his Church.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation. *(pause)*
We pray especially for:

Cleo Anderson	Kimberley Baker	Terry Baker
Joey Beeker	Rose Marie Bell	Jourice Bishop
Chazetta Bland	V. Lester Bond	Juanita Carroll
Lorenzo Carter	Clark and Simmons Families	
Bessie Clemmons	Lola Crenshaw	Aubrey Escoffery
Anthony Fenner	Evans Ford	Vivian Fox
Carman Gayden	Jim Goodwin	Antonio Graves
Suzanne Harris	The Hughes Family	Mary K. Jones
Ezell Roberts	Marion Robinson	Larry Sample
Sallie Simmons	Mary Stafford	Catherine Thrope
Sharron White		

We pray for all veterans and for those who are currently serving in the military especially:
Sgt. Omar Fernandes (Brantley)-United States Air Force

Sr. Airman Matthew Heeter- United States Air Force
Captain Jovonny Carrion-United States Army
Staff Sgt. Ashley Cole-United States Air Force
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Keshar Miller-United States Army Reserve

We also pray for all students, parents, guardians, teachers, and school staffs.

A Prayer in Time of Pandemic

O God of all mercy and compassion, hear our prayers in this time of illness and infection, of isolation, fear, and uncertainty. We pray for the sick, and those weighed down by pain, distress, loneliness, and anxiety; and for all who care for them. We pray for those who have responsibility for public health and social order especially all medical staff and hospital workers, medical researchers, social workers, all essential workers, and for the leaders of the nations and their governments around the globe that they may make wise decisions in this time of crisis. We ask all this and more through your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

A Prayer for Social Justice

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart and especially the hearts of the people of this land, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

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A Prayer for An End to Gun Violence

Gracious God who loves us so perfectly, help us to better love you and each other. We weep for the gun violence that kills our children and so many others needlessly. Bless us with the wisdom and strength to put down our weapons and may violence cease in the nation and in our world. We ask all this in the Name of Jesus, your Son, and our Redeemer. **Amen.**

Silence

The People may add their own petitions

Hear us, Lord;
For your mercy is great.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life.

Silence

The People may add their own thanksgivings

We will exalt you, O God our King;
And praise your Name for ever and ever.

We pray for all who have died that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.

Silence

The People may add their own petitions

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;
Who put their trust in you.

We pray to you also for the forgiveness of our sins.

Silence may be kept.

Leader and People

**Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father;
in your compassion forgive us our sins,
known and unknown,
things done and left undone;
and so uphold us by your Spirit
that we may live and serve you in newness of life,
to the honor and glory of your Name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

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.**

The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

A Prayer for those wishing Communion

In union, O God, with the faithful of your Church where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, we desire to offer you praise and thanksgiving. We present to you our souls and bodies with the earnest wish that we may always be united to you. And since we cannot now receive you sacramentally, we beseech you to come spiritually into our hearts. We unite ourselves with you and embrace you with all the love of our souls. Let nothing ever separate you from us. May we live in you, and may you live in us, both in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

Announcements

Blessing and Dismissal

Celebrant Life is short and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those whom we love or those who walk this way with us. So, be swift to love and make haste to be kind and may the Divine Mystery that is beyond our ability to know, be your companion along the way. And may the blessing of God Almighty, the grace of Christ the Son and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be upon you, and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

Celebrant Let us go forth rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

People **Thanks be to God.**

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