

***FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
PRAYER SERVICE***



*December 20, 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*

On this 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent, we relight the candles of HOPE, PEACE, and JOY.

*[Here relight the first, second and third Advent candles.]*

Listen now, to the words of the prophet Isaiah: “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.” (Isaiah 7: 14)

Let us now light the fourth candle of Advent. This is the candle of LOVE.

*[Here light the fourth Advent candle.]*

As we prepare for the celebration of Christ’s birth let all the earth remember that God loved us so much that he gave us his only begotten Son. May our hearts be filled with that same love for all humankind.

*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 Stanley Johnson

*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, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.*

*Refrain-*

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

*O come, thou Day-spring from on high, and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death’s dark shadow put to flight.*

*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**

**BCP page 356**

**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* 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.**

### **First Reading**

**2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16**

A Reading from the Second Book of Samuel.

When the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

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

*People*      **Thanks be to God.**

**Canticle 15**

**The Song of Mary**

**BCP page 50**

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.**

### **Second Reading**

**Romans 16:25-27**

A Reading from Paul's Letter to the Romans.

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.

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

*People*      **Thanks be to God.**

### **The Gospel**

**Luke 1: 26-38**

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

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

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



**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 St. John's Episcopal Church, Tower Grove. We pray for their interim Priests, Sally and Warren; and Kevin their Deacon. 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 and 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	Nancy Crouse
Aubrey Escoffery	Walter Fenner	Evans Ford
Vivian Fox	Carman Gayden	Jim Goodwin
Antonio Graves	Suzanne Harris	The Hughes Family
Mary K. Jones	Johnetta Martin	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.

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.**

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.**

*BCP page 823*

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, especially Rita Jefferson, friend of Rev. Renee; 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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