

The Holy Friendship
of
St. James Episcopal Church
&
Grace Episcopal Church



The Second Sunday of Advent

December 6, 2020 at 9:00 am

95 Route 2A ~ Preston, CT 06365
860-889-0150 | email: office@stjamespreston.org

The Rev. Kim J. Litsey, Priest in Charge
The Rev. Deacon Ronald Steed
Mike LaFleur & Peter Leibert, Musicians

Join us live on Facebook: St. James Episcopal Church Preston

&

Grace Episcopal Church Yantic
or

on Zoom.

Stay connected on Zoom
for our
Virtual Coffee Hour.

The Liturgy of the Word

Welcome

The Advent Candle

Reader 1: Today is the second Sunday of Advent. Advent is a time of waiting. We wait for God to send divine love and light into our dark world.

Reader 2: How does this happen?

Reader 1: God's light comes through Jesus, who became a human being just like you and me, so that he could show us the way back to God's divine love and light.

Congregation: "Merciful God, give us grace to heed the warnings of the prophets and forsake our sins, so that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer."

Reader 1: We continue to wait for the coming of Jesus. Last Sunday, we began in the dark, then lit one candle. Today, on the second Sunday of Advent, we light two candles.

Reader 2: Every week in Advent, we light another candle. Each candle that we light remind us that the Light of the World will soon come to us in the human form of the baby Jesus.

Congregation: The Way of the Lord is being prepared in our hearts. May every valley be filled and every mountain and hill be made low. May the crooked paths be made straight and the rough ways smooth. When our Lord comes, may all of us then see the salvation of God. Amen.

Opening Hymn #66 Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Celebrant: Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

People: And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

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 hold Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Celebrant and People:

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

Celebrant: Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One.

People: Have mercy upon us.

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray

The Collect

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The Lessons

Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her

that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,

that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;

the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

A voice says, “Cry out!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand for ever.

Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;

lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;

say to the cities of Judah,
“Here is your God!”

See, the Lord GOD comes with might,

and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

- 1 You have been gracious to your land, O LORD, *
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.
- 2 You have forgiven the iniquity of your people *
and blotted out all their sins.
- 8 I will listen to what the LORD God is saying, *
for he is speaking peace to his faithful people
and to those who turn their hearts to him.
- 9 Truly, his salvation is very near to those who fear him, *
that his glory may dwell in our land.
- 10 Mercy and truth have met together; *
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
- 11 Truth shall spring up from the earth, *
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.
- 12 The LORD will indeed grant prosperity, *
and our land will yield its increase.
- 13 Righteousness shall go before him, *
and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed. Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ, according to Mark.

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

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’”

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

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

The Homily

The Rev. Deacon Ronald Steed

~ A short silence will be kept ~

The Nicene Creed

**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.**

The Prayers of the People

In quiet anticipation of your coming, O Lord, remind us that you are always with us, that like Joseph we desire to fulfill your will, and we are eager to pray:

Lector: O God, in days to come your house will be established, and your joy shall reign. We pray for the church, and especially Grace and St. James, that you might teach us your ways and that we might walk in your paths. Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

Lector: Out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and you, O God, will judge the nations. We pray for our nation, and all nations, that your justice and peace would be found by every race, gender and class of people throughout the world. Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

Lector: In your Kingdom, O Lord, wolves lie down with lambs and children play with serpents without fear. We pray for the sick, the suffering, and those in distress of any kind that you would heal all people, comfort everyone in their grief, and bring us to a place to where we can acknowledge our differences and learn from one another. Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

Lector: In your Kingdom, O Lord, even the wilderness and dry land are glad and rejoice. We pray for those who rejoice this week as they celebrate their birthdays and anniversaries that they might obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing might flee away. Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

Lector: In the fullness of time, O God, you sent your son, to be born of our sister Mary. And his name was Emmanuel: God with Us. We thank you for your Presence with us, and we pray that you might be always present with those whom we love but see no longer. Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

Celebrant: O Christ, hear our prayers, restore us, and show us the glorious light of your countenance, that we might be reborn in. Come Lord Jesus. **Amen.**

Confession of Sins

Deacon: Let us confess our sins to God.

Silence may be kept

Celebrant 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.

Absolution

Celebrant: 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 peace of Christ be always with you.

People: And also with you.

† **The Holy Communion** †

Offertory Hymn #448 Oh Love How Deep

The Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him all creatures here below
Praise Him above ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

† **The Great Thanksgiving** †

Eucharistic Prayer B

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 him thanks and praise.

Celebrant:

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 proclaim the glory of your Name.

Celebrant:

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;

Celebrant: 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. James 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,

The Lord's Prayer

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**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

Celebrant: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us,

People: **Therefore let us keep the feast.**

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Silence

A Prayer for Spiritual Communion

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Celebrant and the people: **God of love and grace, of justice and peace, we give you thanks that in the Holy Sacrament you assure us of your presence within us, within the body of Christ, and the faithful through all the generations. Grant that we who have witnessed anew these holy mysteries, though unable to receive the physical elements of the Sacrament, may be moved by your indwelling Spirit ever more fully to embody your holy and life giving presence, reshaping in your likeness the world around us, until we are gathered at last into the fullness of your glorious and eternal presence; through Christ our Risen Lord. Amen.**

Silence

Celebrant: Let us pray.

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.

Announcements

Advent Blessing †

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin. **Amen.**

May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. **Amen.**

May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life. **Amen.**

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 #544 Jesus Shall Reign Wherever the Sun

The Dismissal

Announcements

Yarn Ministry: Members & friends of Grace of St. James who like to knit or crochet are invited to join the yarn ministry. Already we have made many scarves & soap sacks (a sack made out of cotton to hold soap that a person without a home can use to carry the soap as well as use to wash up) to bring to St. Vincent de Paul Place. We are looking for more scarves, soap sacks, hats and 7"x 9" sections that will be made into blankets. All donations will go to St. Vincent de Paul Place & the NL Homeless Ctr. Please Contact Marie Perrin st.james.parish.yarn.ministry@gmail.com. We have a limited supply of donated yarn for use If you do not knit or crochet but want to help by donating yarn, we are looking for acrylic 4-ply yarn in any color.

The New London Homeless Hospitality Center houses hundreds of people experiencing homelessness throughout the region, including in the Greater Norwich Region. Most of them have nothing to take into the home. We are looking for people willing to put together a "cleaning supply kit" for people moving into new homes. A kit would include these items: Mop, Broom, Paper towels, Toilet paper, Dish soap, Disinfectant cleaner (Lysol, Fantastic, or other multipurpose cleaner), Glass cleaner, Bathroom cleaner, Toilet brush, Sponges, & Floor cleaner. Could we imagine putting together 5 such kits? Please contact Deacon Ron at the church office at 860-889-0150.

Our Work: Learning About Antiracism *Will resume in January 2021.*

Dwelling in the Word & Compline Thursdays, 7:00–8:00 PM.

This a short study of a biblical text followed by Compline. It is a quiet reflective and prayerful evening. The Zoom link which has both phone and video access is sent out weekly.

Guided Healing Prayer Meditation Fridays 8:00 AM via Zoom. The Zoom link is sent out weekly.

The Rev. Kim J. Litsey is available during the week, Monday's through Thursday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Please call the church office.