



Welcome to the Church of the Advent! If you are visiting with us, please know we are honored by your presence! We invite you to complete a guest card, which will allow us to remain in contact with you and provide you with additional information. You may place your completed card in the offering plate, or you may give it to our priest as you are leaving. On our website (www.adventks.org), you will find an up-to-date calendar of all church ministries and activities, and you may sign up to receive our weekly email. If you are interested in learning more about the Church of the Advent, the Episcopal Church, or the Christian faith, please contact our priest (Tim Johnson) at (610) 444-4624 or rector@adventks.org. **Again, welcome!**

Elementary Sunday School will meet next Sunday at 9:45; classes will be combined.

Jr/Sr High Sunday School at 9:45, meets in the **St. Jude Room.**

Adult Formation at 9:45 - A lectionary discussion group meets in the **St. Ann Room** to reflect on and discuss the Sunday's appointed Bible readings. No preparation required.

**THE CELEBRATION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST – RITE II
THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 14, 2025 11:00 A.M.**

(Our liturgy is taken from Enriching Our Worship, an authorized supplement to The Book of Common Prayer.)

WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Aria

Flor Peeters

OPENING HYMN

On Jordan's Bank, the Baptist Cry
#76 in the **Hymnal 1982** (blue hymnal)

Celebrant Blessed are you, holy and living God.

People **You come to your people and set them free.**

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 Lord. Lord. **Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

O come, O come Emmanuel
#56, vs. 1-2, in the **Hymnal 1982** (blue hymnal)

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant & People

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.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

THE FIRST LESSON: **Isaiah 35:1-10**

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.

Lector 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 SECOND LESSON: James 5:7-10

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.

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

(Please stand for the reading of the Gospel.)

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

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

GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

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.”

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

HOMILY

WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD

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.

(Please kneel or be seated for the prayers of the people and confession.)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(Response to each petition: **Draw near and hear us.**)

THE CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

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

(silence)

Celebrant Lord Jesus, you are the living Word who was with God from the beginning. Lord, have mercy.

People **Lord, have mercy.**

Celebrant Christ Jesus, you are the life and light of all people. Christ, have mercy.

People **Christ, have mercy.**

Celebrant Lord Jesus, your light shines in the midst of our darkness, and our darkness did not overcome it. Lord, have mercy.

People **Lord, have mercy.**

THE PEACE

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

WE CELEBRATE HOLY COMMUNION

OFFERTORY

E'en so Lord Jesus, Quickly Come

Paul Manz

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS *(Please stand as you are able.)*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures
here be - low. Praise God a - bove, ye heaven - ly host. Praise
Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -
man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

Words: Thomas Ken, 1674
Music: 15th Century French

VENI EMMANUEL
LM with Refrain

Text and tune adapted by Dean McIntyre, The United Methodist General Board of Discipleship, PO Box 340003, Nashville TN 37203-0003. Telephone 615-340-7073. Website <http://www.umcworship.org>. Email address: music@gbod.org. Text and tune are public domain.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

(Eucharistic Prayer 3 from Enriching Our Worship)

<i>Celebrant</i>	The Lord be with you.
<i>People</i>	And also with you.
<i>Celebrant</i>	Lift up your hearts.
<i>People</i>	We lift them to the Lord.
<i>Celebrant</i>	Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
<i>People</i>	It is right to give God thanks and praise.

All thanks and praise are yours at all times and in all places...

...we join with the heavenly beings and all creation as we shout with joy.

S125 from The Hymnal 1982

arr. R. Proulx

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosana in the highest!
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosana in the highest!**

(Please kneel, remain standing, or kneel for the remainder of the prayer.)

Glory and honor are yours, Creator of all, your Word has never been silent...

...your earth has formed and human hands have made, we acclaim you, O Christ:

**Dying, you destroyed our death. Rising, you restored our life.
Christ Jesus, come in glory.**

Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine...

...Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, we worship you our God and Creator in voices of unending praise.
Blessed are you now and forever. **Amen!**

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

**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.
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.**

Celebrant This is the true bread which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

People **Whoever eats this bread will live forever.**

COMMUNION HYMN *Watchman, Tell Us of the Night*
#640 in the **Hymnal 1982** (blue hymnal)

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Celebrant Let us pray.

Celebrant & People

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.

WE RETURN TO THE WORLD

THE ADVENT BLESSING

Celebrant 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.

People **Amen.**

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

People **Amen.**

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

People **Amen.**

Celebrant And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever.

People **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

Rejoice, Rejoice Believers
#68 in the **Hymnal 1982** (blue hymnal)

DISMISSAL

Celebrant Let us bless the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Prelude and Fugue in G Minor

J.S. Bach

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Common Prayer, the Episcopal Church in the United States of America. Used with permission.
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*The Sanctuary Candle is sponsored this week by Fran Wilson in
loving memory of all those who have passed away.*

WORSHIP SUPPORT

Lector: Diane Chun

Sub Deacon: Barbara Thornton

Eucharistic Minister: Barbara Thornton

Director of Music: Wilson G. Somers

*Pastoral Emergencies – If you have a pastoral emergency requiring the
assistance of a priest, please contact the church office during office hours.
Outside of office hours, please contact the Rev. Tim Johnson directly at
484-730-1988.*

Suggested Spiritual Practice During Advent: Read the Gospel of Luke

The Gospel of Luke was written around the end of the first century, approximately seven or eight decades after the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and it was written for a predominately Gentile (non-Jewish) community. This Gospel demonstrates that God's promises through the Prophets of the Old Testament are fulfilled in the life and ministry of Jesus and that these promises extend to Gentiles also. Luke invites his readers to follow the example of Jesus and care deeply for people whom we often neglect and overlook in our world, namely the poor, the ill, and the vulnerable. This concern for the neglected is present from the very beginning of the Gospel. In the first chapter, God chooses Mary, a young, poor girl of no status, to be the mother of Jesus, and in Mary's song—the Magnificat—she extols God's mercy and love for the humble and lowly. The writer of Luke's Gospel was also the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, which is understood to be the sequel to Luke's Gospel.

The Season of Advent – What is it?

To understand the season of Advent, it is helpful to understand the shape of the church year – what we call the liturgical calendar – which operates differently from the standard calendar (Jan.-Dec.) year that orders nearly every aspect of our lives. The church year is designed to help us walk through the life of Jesus each year. The church year is anchored by the two most significant events of Jesus's life – his birth (incarnation) and his resurrection – so the celebrations of Christmas and Easter give shape and structure to the rest of the church year. Christmas and Easter are so important that they are not just celebrated on single days (Christmas Day and Easter Sunday); rather, each of these events is celebrated with an entire season. The Christmas Season spans the twelve days from Christmas Eve to January 6th, and the Easter Season spans the fifty days from Easter Sunday through the Feast of Pentecost.

Each of these festive seasons is preceded by a season of preparation. In preparation for the Easter Season, we observe the season of Lent, which spans the forty weekdays (Mondays-Saturdays) from Ash Wednesday to the Saturday

before Easter Sunday. In preparation for Christmas, we observe the season of Advent, which spans the weeks containing the four Sundays before Christmas Eve.

We mark this preparatory season of Advent by using either violet (purple) or blue in the hangings on the altar, counting the Sundays by lighting candles on the Advent wreath, and keeping decorations in the church to a minimum. Whereas secular society tends to start celebrating Christmas at the end of November and wraps up Christmas a day or two after Christmas Day, the church doesn't officially begin celebrating Christmas until Christmas Eve and continues the celebration until January 6th. There are two themes you will hear in the Bible readings used during Advent. The first theme is that of waiting for the birth of the promised Messiah (Jesus). The second theme you will hear in the readings is the promise that Jesus will return in the "fullness of time." So, in the season of Advent we prepare to celebrate his first coming or "Advent" at Christmas as well as look to his second coming or "Second Advent" in the fullness of time.

Three Suggestions for Observing Advent

Faithfully observing Advent is a challenge since the rest of the world has already moved onto Christmas, and let's be honest, patiently and expectedly waiting for something is not a virtue that is valued in our rather impatient culture. There are, though, some simple ways to help you observe this season. First, use an Advent wreath. An Advent wreath consists of four candles – three blue or purple candles and one pink or rose-colored candle. Each Sunday during Advent, light an additional candle. The pink/rose candle is used on the third Sunday of Advent. Second, pace yourself with your decorating, adding to your decorations each week during the season rather than putting up all your decorations at once. This approach will help you experience a sense of anticipation and growing expectation. Finally, consider adding a regular practice of prayer and/or silence to your daily routines during this season.