# The Third Sunday of Advent

Pecember 17, 2023



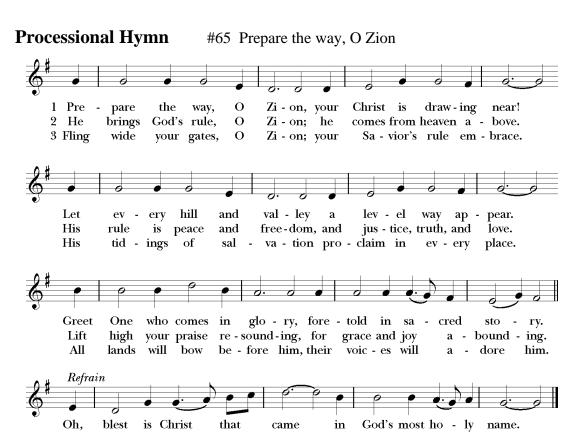
Advent carries two simultaneous visions of our expectations: we await yet again the birth of the babe in the manger, and we also await Christ's coming again to fulfill all things. We often prepare for Advent by "getting ready": planning, organizing, and ordering supplies for various gatherings and worship services. Yet preparing for the coming of Christ is not a matter of having everything under control. Christ's arrival disrupts—disrupts injustice, sin, and brokenness in a society in which we are deeply embedded. A prayer for Christ to come to us is a prayer for a holy disruption of our lives that we cannot control and that we might struggle to accept.

8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m., The Holy Eucharist, Rite II
The Rev. William Petersen, Celebrant
Holly Simons, Minister of Music

## THE GATHERING ~ The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

**Prelude** "Traditions of Christmas" – *C Davis/CPenington of Mannheim Steamroller* Weihnachts-Sonatine, Opus 251, No. 3 – *Carl Reinecke* 

Claudia Bissett, alto flute



## **Opening Acclamation**

Celebrant Blessed are you, holy and living One.

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

Glory be to God on high! Peace, goodwill to all the earth. Let us sing a joyful song to the Christ, the Living Word. Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

## Collect Of The Day Lighting of the Advent Wreath

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting amid growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light. Sometimes the wreath is embellished with natural dried flowers or fruit. Its evergreen branches lead the household and the congregation to the evergreen Christmas tree. In many homes, the family gathers for prayers around the wreath.

## Third Sunday of Advent

This blessing is read when lighting three candles.

Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow. You bring water to parched ground and life out of death. Bless us as this light grows, and send sorrow and sighing to flee away. Give us strength and patience, trusting that you are true to your promises. Transform the lives of all who suffer with your wonders near at hand. Amen.

THE WORD ~ God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

**Lessons** We hear the Word of God proclaimed.

**The First Lesson** Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The principle of justice is to guide the nation of Israel, and they are to understand that it is none other than God who is an advocate for the poor, the oppressed, the downtrodden, and the brokenhearted.

*Reader* A reading from 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.

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

People Thanks be to God

## The Song of Mary Magnificat

Luke 1:46-55

Mary offers a song of praise to God who has looked with favor on her and who has lifted up the lowly and brought down the powerful.

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.

#### **The Second Lesson** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

As he concludes his letter to the church in Thessalonica, Paul exhorts the new converts to live joyfully and prayerfully in readiness for the Lord's coming. Although they are to test what they hear, the disciples are to expect to discover the Spirit in prophecy. Trusting in a faithful God, the followers of Jesus are to seek to avoid all forms of evil and to become holy in every way.

Reader A reading from Paul's first letter 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.

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

**People** Thanks be to God

**The Gospel** John 1:6-8, 19-28

In the opening passages of his gospel the fourth evangelist firmly characterizes the mission of John the Baptist: he is the forerunner and witness to the Christ. He bears testimony to the one who is the light of all human life. John is not the Christ or a figure for Elijah or one of the other prophets. He prepares the Lord's way and baptizes, while even now the one whom John is unworthy to serve stands unknown in their midst

Gospeller The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People Glory to you, Lord 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.

Gospeller The Gospel of the Lord.

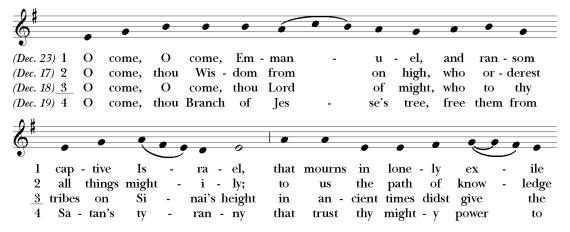
People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

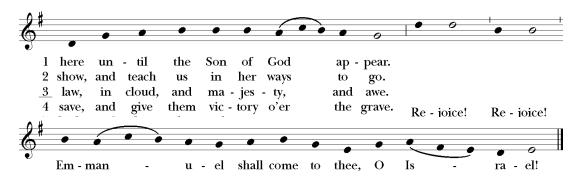
Sermon

The Rev. William Petersen

Silence for reflection may be kept. The people stand in body or spirit.

# **Hymn of the Day** #56 O Come, O come Emmanuel (v 1-3)





#### **Nicene Creed**

We profess our faith with the whole church.

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,

was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.

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, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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

The leader and people pray responsively.

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

#### A brief silence.

Fill our mouths with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy as we bear witness to the great things you have done. Give your church a spirit of gladness as we gather and as we are sent. Merciful God,

## receive our prayer.

Let the trees of the field sing your praise. Protect forests, orchards, rainforests, and all wooded areas from disease and deforestation. Keep us grateful for their gifts of oxygen, food, shade, and shelter. Merciful God,

#### receive our prayer.

You love justice and promise your favor to those who are oppressed, brokenhearted, and incarcerated. Grant wisdom and compassion to those who work for public safety and all who work within prisons, jails, and courts, that mercy may increase and violence wither away. Merciful God,

### receive our prayer.

Give us strength to pray for our world without ceasing and provoke us toward love and good deeds for all who are in need (*especially*). Provide for all without adequate housing, food, employment, or access to health care. Empower us as helpers and advocates. Merciful God,

### receive our prayer.

Open our hearts to those who serve as truth-tellers in our church and in our society. Bless leaders in church and society in their task of proclamation. Amplify voices of peacemakers, advocates, and especially those whose voices are ignored or marginalized. Merciful God,

## receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

With gratitude we rejoice in the saints who witnessed to your life in all circumstances, in whom your Spirit was not quenched, even in death. Through them, teach us always to hold fast to what is good. Merciful God,

# receive our prayer.

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy. **Amen.** 

### Confession

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Everlasting God,

you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation's bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.

#### **Absolution**

Hear these words of assurance:

God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all. **Amen.** 

The Peace

We share the gift of Christ's peace and love.

**Announcements** 

We share our life of faith together in community.

**The Offering** Having listened to the Word of God, affirmed our faith, confessed our sins, received forgiveness and shared in the peace, we are prepared for the drama and miracle of the Holy Communion. At the offertory, we gratefully offer back to God some of what God has given us, symbolically in the bread and wine, and in the money we give.



For everyone's safety, we will not pass the traditional plate during today's service. Instead, an offering plate is available at the entrances to the worship space, or you may visit wolfesaints.com/donate.

Let us with gladness present the offerings and thanksgivings of our life and labor to the Lord.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

#### **Eucharistic Prayer C**

CelebrantThe Lord be with you.PeopleAnd also with you.CelebrantLift 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.

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.

God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.

## Glory to you for ever and ever.

At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.

### By your will they were created and have their being.

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.

#### Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.

Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.

## By his blood, he reconciled us. By his wounds, we are healed.

And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

Celebrant and People

#### Sanctus

(sung to the tune "Bring a Torch)

Holy, holy, holy One... God of power, God of might. Heav'n and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed, blessed is the One Who comes, Blessed! Blessed! In the Name of God.

The Celebrant continues

And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, 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, gave thanks, 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."

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,

## We celebrate his death and resurrection, as we await the day of his coming.

Lord God of our Fathers; God of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and Jacob and Rachel; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

#### Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.

Accept these prayers and praises, Father, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation. **AMEN** 

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

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

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

**Lamb of God** (sung to the tune "O Come, O Come Emmanuel")

O Lamb of God You take away our sin; have mercy on us, give us Your peace. Prepare us to receive Your grace, and teach us how to follow Your ways. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel has come to you, O Israel.

A period of silence is kept.

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.

# Prayer For Spiritual Communion for those worshipping online

There is a long-standing practice in the Episcopal Church to offer a means for people to receive Holy Communion spiritually when it cannot be received physically.

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul.

Since I cannot receive you in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

## **Communion Choral Meditation** A tiny child will come – *D. Besig*

## **Prayer After Communion**

Let us pray together:

Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

# **Sending Blessing**

May you trust in whatever sacred thing bubbles up from within you.

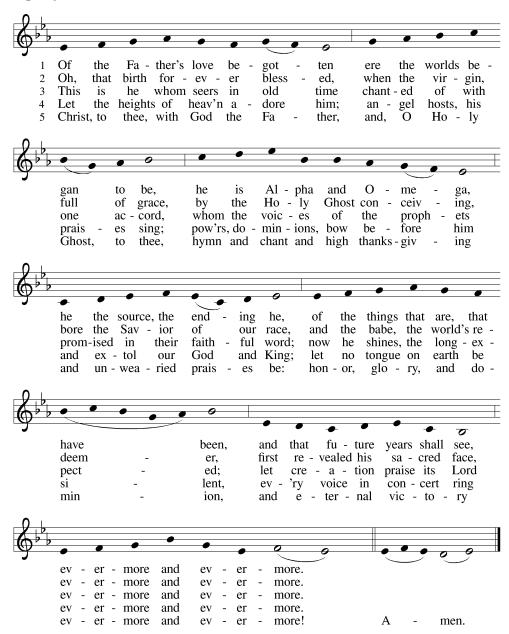
May you remember that the Divine takes on flesh and yours is no exception.

May you be a conduit of eternal love, and a moment of grace for a world that waits and longs for hope.

In the name of the one who + creates, saves and sustains you.

Amen.

# Sending Hymn ELW #295 Of the Father's Love begotten



#### **Dismissal**

Celebrant Go in peace. Keep awake.

People Thanks be to God.

**Postlude** Creator of the Stars of Night (Plainsong @9<sup>th</sup> century) – arr. D. Lasky

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#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **December 17 ~ Third Sunday of Advent**

We welcome all who are visiting with us today or who are new in our midst. Please complete a Welcome Card found in the pew racks and sign the guest book in the Narthex. All are invited to join us for coffee hour in the parish hall downstairs immediately following worship.

#### LARGE PRINT BULLETINS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE TABLE IN NARTHEX.

#### PLEASE PRAY for:

In our Parish Cycle of Prayer: Ron & Carolyn Sundquist.

In the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer: All Saints Episcopal Church in Wolfeboro.

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer:

For those who have died:

#### Our Parish

Howard Blaney, Linda Brown, Jim & Anne Bullitt, Prue Fitts, Felicity Freund, Judy Hess, Louise Graham, Don & Sandi Johnson, The Jeffers family (Polly, Dave, Rachael), Zell Kellogg, Bhupendra & Judy Khetani, Norma Lunney, Jacqueline McLaughlin, Penny Meyer, Connie Mitchell, Warren Muir, Carol Pearson, Danielle Pierpont, Bree Schuette, Sebastian Tordonato, Inger Woerheide.

## Our Family & Friends

Basil Brown, Rebecca DeNeault, Candy Desrocher, Michael Dowd, Anne Fish, Stephanie Fullam, Ruth Gray, Linda Hall, Susan Belt Hartson, Faye Juul, Jim Lunney, Margie, Tom Southern, Marguerite Truesdale, Peggy Young.

# The Altar Flowers are given in the glory of God.

If you wish names added or removed from the prayer list, please contact the Parish Office by phone or email: allsaints@metrocast.net

December Ministry Assignments	<u>17-Advent 3</u>	24-Advent 4 9am Christmas Eve 5pm & 9pm
Altar Guild	Carolyn Sundquist Gayle Gurney	Susan Harding Lucy Hancock Candace Tordonato
Usher	Holm	Jones White Hancock
Lectors 10am	Aiden Schuette- Simon	Jane Nielsen
Eucharistic Ministers 8am 10am	Jay Wyman Steve Cloutier Gayle Gurney	Cate McMahon J. Nielsen, B. Woodard A. Slocum, D. DeKemper
Greeters	Volunteer	Volunteer
Flower Guild	Sue Adams	Christmas Poinsettias
Flower Delivery	Lynne Slocum	Meg Sislane
Counting @ 10am	12/19 Deb Hoyt Lyn Healy	12/26 Deb Hoyt Carolyn Sundquist

# Birthdays this week:

Linda Brown 12/17 Carol Cloutier 12/18 Penny Meyer 12/21 Lucy Hancock 12/23 **About All Saints'** ~ We welcome you to a church that is clear about the Christian faith that stands in the rich tradition of Christian worship that encourages people to grow in the faith they profess, that believes we ought to live so as to make a difference in the world. If you are looking for such a church, then All Saints' Episcopal Church is for you - we invite you into our community of faith.

**How to use this Worship Bulletin** ~ We follow the order of worship from The Book of Common Prayer as it is printed in this bulletin. Leader parts are in regular print; the congregation parts are in **bold** print. Notes and directions are printed in *italics*. Hymn numbers are noted in this bulletin and can be found in The Hymnal 1982 found in the pew racks.

#### All are invited to receive Communion in this church.

**The Common Cup** *as an Option* Following guidance from Bishop +Rob to clergy and discussion with our Worship and Music Team and Vestry, we will offer the option of receiving wine by common cup as we offer the option of gluten free bread during Holy Communion. The Eucharistic Ministers will continue to distribute wine via individual cups and if you desire the common cup\*, please ask Pastor Bill (just as you would for gluten free).

\*Note: For sanitation concerns and at the direction of our bishop, we will no longer offer the opportunity for Intinction (the dipping of the bread/wafer into the wine. The common cup is only available for drinking from.

**Facility Information** ~ Handicap accessible restrooms are located downstairs in the hallways exiting the Parish Hall and upstairs in the hallway exiting the sanctuary. A small restroom is located off the narthex lobby at the rear of the worship space. We welcome children in worship, but should you (or they) need, an unstaffed nursery area is located off the narthex lobby.

**Seeking a Church Home?** ~ If you would like additional information about All Saints', are seeking a faith community to call home, or interested in exploring your faith, please speak with the rector.

Masks are not required in the building at the present time. However, if you feel more comfortable wearing a mask, then you are encouraged to do so.

**Sharing of the peace** will be done from your seat only.

Offering plates are available at entrances to the worship space or giving online @ wolfesaints.com.

Ministers: All the People of All Saints'
Bishop: The Rt. Rev. A. Robert Hirschfeld
Rector: The Rev. William "Bill" Petersen
Priest Associate: The Rev. Elizabeth Preysner
Minister of Music: Holly Simons
Sunday School Teacher: Danielle Pierpont
Parish Administrator: Debra Hoyt
Sexton: Mark McLaughlin

We continue to livestream for those unable to worship in person.

All Saints' Episcopal Church, Wolfeboro PO Box 359, 258 South Main Street, Wolfeboro, NH 03894 (603) 569-3453 www.wolfesaints.com / email: allsaints@meterocast.net