

The Second Sunday of

ADVENT

December 6th, 2020



EVERY VALLEY SHALL BE RAISED UP,
EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL MADE LOW;
THE ROUGH GROUND SHALL BECOME LEVEL,
THE RUGGED PLACES A PLAIN.



St. Stephen's

Episcopal Church + Lakeland, Florida

To Love and Serve God and Neighbor

Opening Hymn
#76, “On Jordan’s Bank” verses 1&2

*On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings.*

*Then cleansed be every breast from sin;
make straight the way for God within,
and let each heart prepare a home
where such a mighty guest may come.*

Opening Acclamation

+ Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

Collect for Purity

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. **Amen.**

O Come, O Come Emmanuel
verses 1&2

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!*

The Collect of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

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 First Reading

A Reading from Isaiah.

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice of one calling in the wilderness prepare the way for the

Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

(Isaiah 40:1-5)

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The Psalm

85:8-13

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.

Truly, his salvation is very near to those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.

Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Truth shall spring up from the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

The Lord will indeed grant prosperity, and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness shall go before him, and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.

+ Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The Second Reading

A Reading from Second Peter.

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.

(2 Peter 3:8-15)

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The Holy Gospel

+ + + The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Mark. **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way”—“a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him.

Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. John wore clothing made of camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

And this was his message: “After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

(Mark 1:1-8)

The Gospel of The Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon

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.

Prayers of the People

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

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;
especially those on our prayer list and the suffering people of the world.
For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For those serving in the armed forces, those wounded or recovering in veterans' hospitals, those serving in combat and those serving in safety.
For the peace and protection of God.

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, Greg our Bishop, David, Rob, and Doug our clergy, and for all bishops and other ministers;
For all who serve God in his Church.

For blessings upon Tyler and Sadee;
For healthy babies and a safe delivery.

For our schools, scouts, and all of the children and youth of our parish.

For your grace and their ever growing knowledge and love of you.

For our parish family.

Bind us together and draw us always closer to you.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

(you may add your own intercessions and thanksgivings)

Hear us, Lord;

For your mercy is great.

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

(you may add your own intercessions and 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.

(you may add your own intercessions and thanksgivings)

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.

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.

+ Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who in his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with repentance and faith turn to him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you
And also with you.

The Announcements

ADVENT QUIET SERVICE TONIGHT, 7PM

SPECIAL SERVICE SCHEDULE NEXT SUNDAY

Because of the Bishop's Visitation, we will only have two services next week -- **9:00am in the Sanctuary** and **11:00am in the Worship Center**. Both services will be livestreamed.
Remember our Christmas Donation collections finish next Sunday.

VERSE OF THE WEEK

2 Peter 3:11

What kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.

The Offertory

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

(Ephesians 5:2)

#76, “On Jordan’s Bank” verse 3

*For thou art our salvation, Lord,
our refuge and our great reward;
without thy grace we waste away
like flowers that wither and decay.*

The Presentation

All things come of thee, O Lord,
And of thine own have we given thee.

(1 Chronicles 29:14)

Eucharistic Prayer B

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

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 to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. + Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

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,

We remember his death, We proclaim his resurrection, We await his coming in glory;

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 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 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.**

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

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

The Family Song

*Here we are, gathered together as a family
Bound as one, lifting up our voices to the King of kings
We sing Abba, Father, holy is Your name
Abba, Father, holy is Your name.*

These are 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.

Please stay at your seat. The clergy will
come to you with the consecrated Bread.

#66, "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus" verses 1&2

*Come, thou long expected Jesus
born to set Thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in Thee.*

*Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;*

*dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.*

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

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.

Prayers, Intercessions, and Thanksgiving

Anniversaries This Week

Kevin and Kim Jackimowicz, Scott and Carla Sauve

Birthdays This Week:

Linda France, Jessie Gomez, Ian Millican, Tim Irwin,
Ellen Simms, John MacGilvary, Dale Reinert, Mariela Brink

Birthday Prayer

Watch over thy children, O Lord, as their days increase; bless and guide them wherever they may be. Strengthen them when they stand; comfort them when discouraged or sorrowful; raise them up if they fall; and in their hearts may thy peace which passeth understanding abide all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing

+ May the peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and his son Jesus Christ and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

Closing Hymn
#76, "On Jordan's Bank" verses 4&5

*To heal the sick stretch out thine hand,
and bid the fallen sinner stand;
shine forth, and let thy light restore
earth's own true loveliness once more.*

*All praise, eternal Son, to thee,
whose advent doth thy people free;
whom with the Father we adore
and Holy Spirit evermore.*

The Dismissal

Go in Peace, to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

