

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH



The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24, 2023

Service Program for the 10:30 a.m. Sung Mass
Bulletin Insert from the Episcopal Church
Grace at Christmas
Grace Notes
This Week at Grace

pp. 3-18
p. 19
p. 20
p. 21
p. 22



Grace Episcopal Church
55 New Park Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106
Office: 860 233-0825 Fax: 860 233-5082
E-mail: church@gracehartford.org Web site: www.gracehartford.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/GECHartford

We are a diverse community united by our commitment to Jesus Christ and our desire to live the Christian life. Our prayers and the Sacraments help us find Christ in church and in the world. Seeing Christ in each other and in the faces of strangers, we are inspired to reach out in love and service.

The Rev. Rowena J. Kemp, *Rector*
Cell phone: 203-209-4178 Church office: 860-233-0825
Email: RevRowena@gracehartford.org

The Rev. Canon Robert G. Carroon, *Associate Priest*
The Rev. Canon Annika Warren, *Associate Priest*
The Rev. Joseph L. Pace, *Associate Priest*
Mr. Kyle Swann, *Choirmaster and Organist*

The Vestry
Douglas Bowman, *Senior Warden*; Thomas Phillips, *Junior Warden*
Katharine Rovetti, *Parish Clerk*
Mark Lacedonia, *Treasurer*; Barbara Galbreath, *Assistant Treasurer*
Adrienne Brown, Josephine Dominguez, Pamela Glasner,
Claudia Gwardyak, Nadia Holmes, Sandra Morgan



WELCOME to all who are joining with us virtually as we celebrate *THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT*. We hope you feel at home with us and that you find the love, peace, inspiration, and strength to meet the challenges of your daily life.

We hope that you will take part in our worship by making the Peoples' responses as indicated and joining in the hymn-singing.

If you would like more information about Grace Church, or the Episcopal Church, please communicate with our Rector, The Rev. Rowena Kemp, or make an appointment with her to discuss any questions you have.

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24, 2023

Sung Mass, 10:30 A.M.

Propers of Year B

Mass Setting: *Missa Advenio*

Plainsong, 10th c.

This setting of the Ordinary of the Mass is for congregational singing.

Voluntary: *Meine Seele erhebt den Herrn*

Johann Sebastian Bach (d. 1750)

Entrance Rite and The Liturgy of the Word

Introit (choir) *Rorate coeli*

Mode I

[Antiphon] Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open and blossom forth a Savior. [Psalm] The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Glory to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. [Repeat antiphon.]

Opening Acclamation

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

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

Collect for Purity

ALMIGHTY GOD, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Summary of the Law

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith:

THOU shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

Kyrie eleison (sung by all)

Missa Advenio

The musical notation consists of three staves of music in a single system. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It contains the lyrics "(3x)Ky ri - e e le - i - son. (3x)Christe" with performance directions "Cantor" and "All" above the notes. The second staff continues the lyrics "e - - le - i - son. (2x)Ky ri - e e - - le - i - son." with "Cantor" and "All" directions. The third staff concludes with "(1x)Ky - ri - e e - - le - i - son." and "Cantor" and "All" directions. The music is written in a plainsong style with a mix of quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, and rests.

The Collect of the Day

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And with thy spirit.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

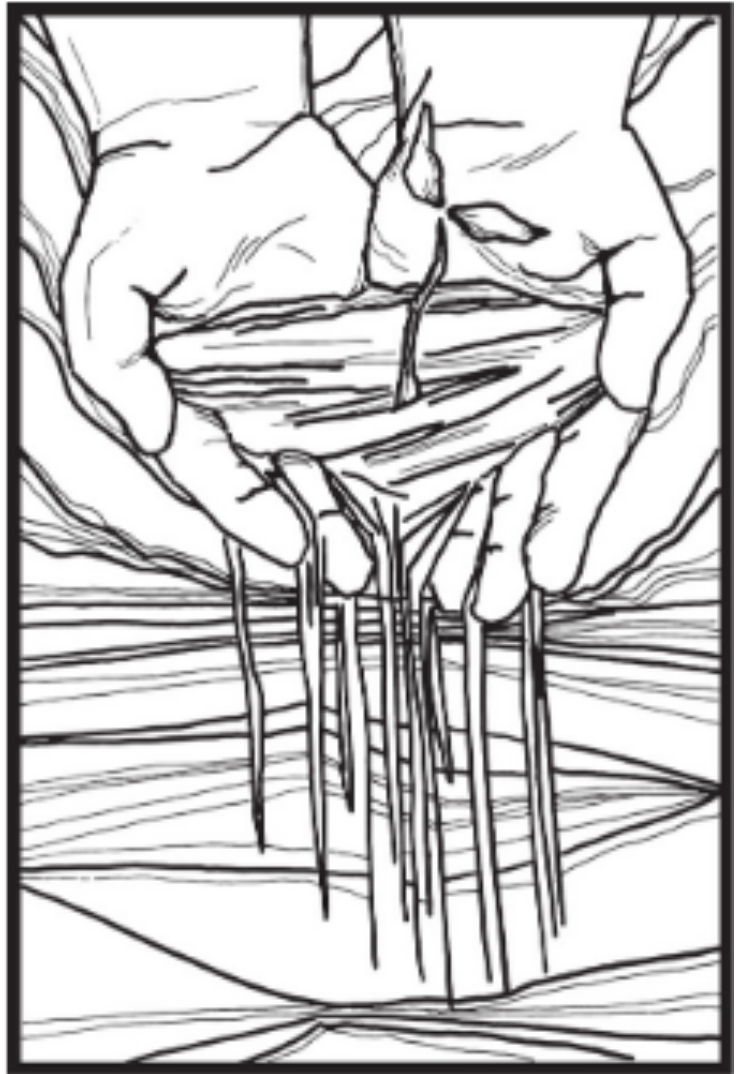
WE beseech thee, Almighty God, to purify our consciences by thy daily visitation, that when thy Son our Lord cometh he may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Old Testament Lesson: 2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16 [NRSV]

A Reading from the Second Book of Samuel.

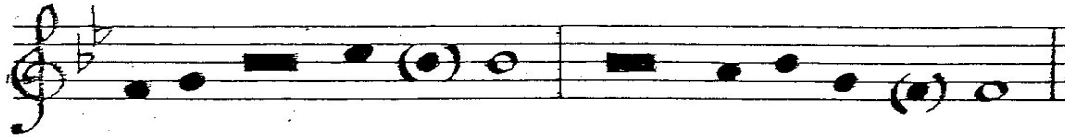
NOW when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is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

The Word of the Lord.



People's Response: Thanks be to God.

Congregation sings the italicized verses; note intonation on all verses.



- 1 MY SOUL doth magnify the | Lord,
** and my spirit hath rejoic'd in | God my Savior.*
- 2 FOR HE hath re- / garded
** the lowliness of | his handmaiden;*
- 3 FOR BE-hold, from | henceforth
** all generations shall | call me blessèd,*
- 4 FOR HE that is mighty hath magnifièd | me;
** and | holy is his ^ Name.*
- 5 AND HIS mercy is on them that | fear him
** throughout all | generations.*
- 6 HE HATH show'd strength with his | arm;
** he hath scatterèd the proud in the imagi- / nation of their ^ hearts.*
- 7 HE HATH put down the mighty from their | seat,
** and hath exalted the | humble and meek.*
- 8 HE HATH fillèd the hungry with | good things
** and the rich he hath sent | empty away.*
- 9 HE RE-memb'ring his mercy hath holpen his servant | Isra^el
** as he promisèd to our forefathers, Abraham and his | seed for ever.*

The Epistle: Romans I6: 25-27 [NRSV]

A Reading from the Letter of Paul 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.

The Word of the Lord.

People's Response: Thanks be to God.

Alleluia *Veni Domine*

Tone VI; v. harm. Healey Willan (d. 1968)



Choir: Come, O Lord, make no long tarrying: deliver thy people from their misdeeds.



The Holy Gospel: St. Luke I: 26-38 [RSV]

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

People's response: ✠ Glory be to thee, O Lord.

IN the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name 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 of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no husband?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord.

People's Response: Praise be to thee, O Christ.

The Sermon

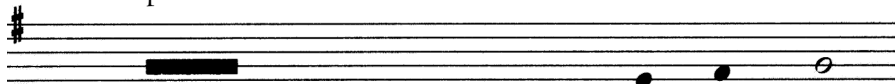
The Rev. Rowena J. Kemp, *Rector*

The Nicene Creed (*sung by all*)

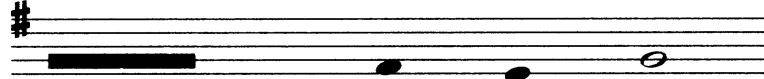
I be- lieve in one God, the Fa- ther Al- mighty-y, Ma- ker of hea- ven and earth;
and of all things vi- si- ble and in- vi- si- ble; and in one Lord Je- sus Christ,
the on- ly- be- got- ten Son of God, be- got- ten of his Fa- ther be- fore all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light, ve- ry God of ve- ry God, be- got- ten, not made,
be- ing of one sub- stance with the Fa- ther; by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our sal- va- tion came down from hea- ven,
(*kneel*) and was in- car- nate by the Ho- ly Ghost of the Virgin Ma- ry, and was made man;

(stand) and was cru- ci- fi- ed al- so for us un- der Pon- tius Pi- late;
 he suf- fer- ed and was bu- ri- ed; and the third day he rose a- gain
 ac- cor- ding to the Scrip- tures, and as- cend- ed in- to hea- ven, and sit- teth on the
 right hand of the Fa- ther; and he shall come a- gain, with glo- ry, to judge both
 the quick and the dead; whose king- dom shall have no end. And I be- lieve in the
 Ho- ly Ghost the Lord, and Gi- ver of Life, who pro- ceed- eth from the Fa- ther and the Son;
 who with the Fa- ther and the Son to- ge- ther is wor- shipp' d and glo- ri- fi- ed;
 who spake by the Pro- phets. And I be- lieve one ho- ly Cath- o- lic and A- po- sto-
 lic Church; I ac- know- ledge one Bap- tism for the re- mis- sion of sins: and I look for
 the re- sur- rec- tion of the dead,* and the life of the world to come. A- - - men.





Leader: Let us pray for the Church and | for the world.



Grant almighty God, that all who confess thy Name may be united in thy truth, live together in thy love, and reveal thy glory / in the world. *(Silence)*



Lord, in thy mer - cy *hear our prayer.* *(Sung after every intercession)*

Leader: Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the / common good. *(Silence)*
 Lord, in thy mercy *People: hear our prayer.*

Leader: Give us all a reverence for the earth as thine own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to thy hon- / or and glory. *(Silence)*
 Lord, in thy mercy *People: hear our prayer.*

Leader: Watch over thy children *Kenneth & Nadia*, 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. *(Silence)*
 Lord, in thy mercy *People: hear our prayer.*

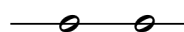
Leader: We pray for an increase in the membership of this parish; that we may have the hands and hearts to carry / out thy will. *(Silence)*
 Lord, in thy mercy *People: hear our prayer.*

Leader: We commend to thy gracious care and keeping all the men and women of our armed forces at home and abroad [*especially N.*]. Defend them day by day with thy heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils which beset them; and grant them a sense of thine abiding presence wherever / they may be. *(Silence)*
 Lord, in thy mercy *People: hear our prayer.*

Leader: Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit (*pause*); give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of / thy salvation. *(Silence)*
 Lord, in thy mercy *People: hear our prayer.*

Leader: We commend to thy mercy all who have died, that thy will for them may be fulfilled (*pause*); and we pray that we may share with all thy saints in thine e- / ternal kingdom. *(Silence)*
 Lord, in thy mercy *People: hear our prayer.*

Celebrant: Lord, hear the prayers of thy people; and what we have asked faithfully, grant that we may obtain effectually, to the glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *People*



A - men.

Confession of Sin and Absolution

Deacon: Ye who do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways: draw near with faith, and make your humble confession to Almighty God, devoutly kneeling.

People: Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men: We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honor and glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Celebrant: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto 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.*

Hear the Word of God to all who truly turn to him.

Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. *Matthew 11: 28*
God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *John 3: 16*

The Peace

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And with thy spirit.

The Ministers and People greet one another in the Name of the Lord.





The Holy Communion

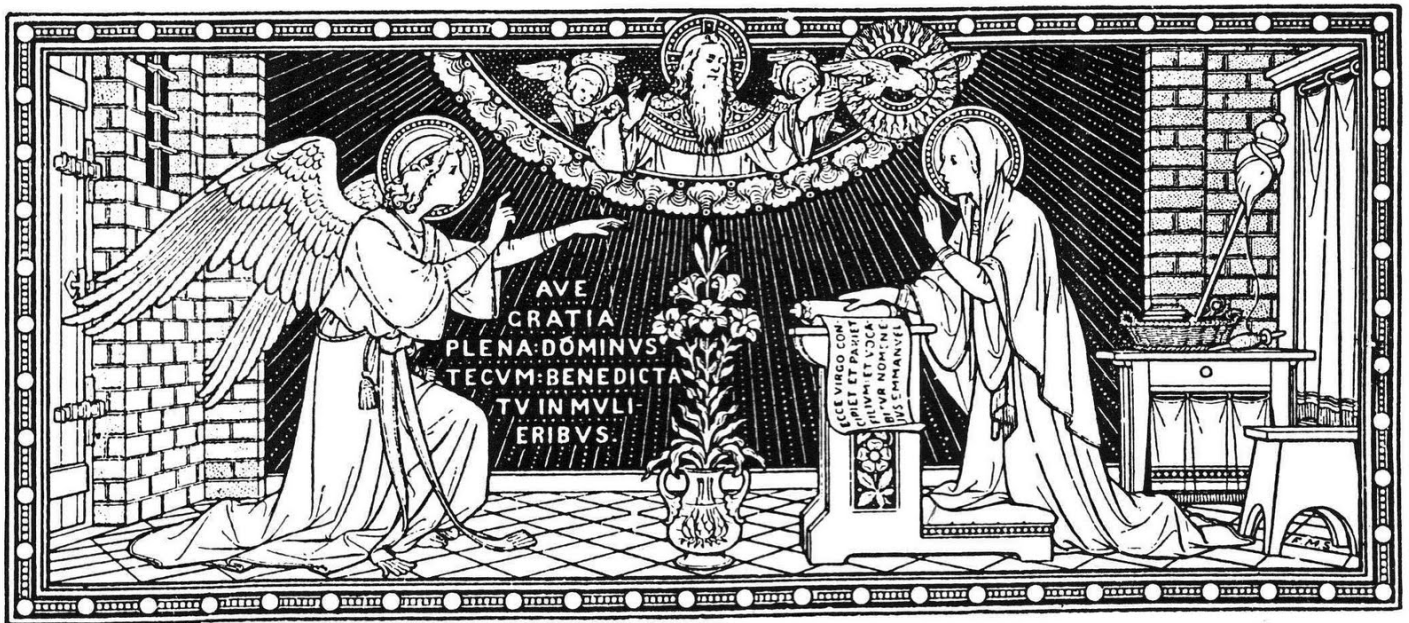
Offertory Sentence

Celebrant: Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and make good thy vows unto the Most High. *Psalm 50: 14*

Offertory (*choir*) *Ave, Maria*

Mode VIII

HAIL Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women,
Hand blessed is the fruit of thy womb.



Carol (*choir*)

Besancon carol tune, Arr. Martin Shaw (1875-1958)

People, look East; the time is near of the crowning of the year. Make your house fair as you are able: trim the hearth, and set the table. People, look East and sing today: Love the Guest is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall brim. Shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together. People, look East, and sing today: Love the Star is on the way.

Angels, announce to man and beast him who cometh from the East. Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming. People look East and sing today: Love the Lord is on the way.

Eleanor Farjeon

1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from hea - ven came,
 2 "For know a bless - ed Mo - ther thou shalt be,
 3 Then gen - tle Ma - ry meek - ly bowed her head,
 4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born

his wings as drift - ed snow, his eyes as flame;
 all gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee,
 "To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said,
 in Beth - le - hem, all on a Christ - mas morn,

"All hail," said he, "thou low - ly maid - en Ma - ry,
 thy Son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,
 "my soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy his ho - ly Name."
 and Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say -

most high - ly fa - vored la - dy," Glo - ri - a!
 most high - ly fa - vored la - dy," Glo - ri - a!
 Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy, Glo - ri - a!
 "Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy," Glo - ri - a!

Presentation of the alms and oblations

Celebrant: All things come of thee, O Lord,

People: And of thine own have we given thee.

Orate

Celebrant: Pray that this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty.

People: May the Lord receive this sacrifice at thy hands, to the praise and glory of his holy Name, both to our benefit and that of all his holy Church.

Sursum corda

Celebrant *People*
 The Lord be with you. And with thy spi- rit.

Celebrant *People*
 Lift up your hearts. We lift them up un-to the Lord.

Celebrant
 Let us give thanks un- to our Lord God.

People
 It is meet and right so to do.

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant says,

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

BECAUSE thou didst send thy 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 with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

Sanctus and Benedictus (*sung by all*)

Missa Advenio

9 *Cantor* *All*
f Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Lord God of Hosts,

13
 Hea-ven and earth are full of thy glo - ry:

15
 Glo - ry be to thee, O Lord Most High.

17 *Cantor*
p Bles-sed is he that co - meth in the Name of the Lord:

19 *All*
 Ho - san - na in the High - est.

The Canon of the Mass

Celebrant: Let us pray.

ALL glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender Mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ✠

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me." ✠

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, ✠ be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord;

BY whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end.

People

—●—○—○—
A- men.

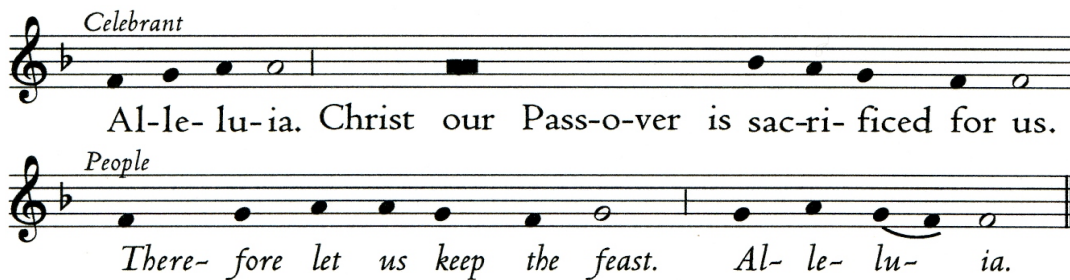
The Lord's Prayer (*sung by all*)

Celebrant: And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

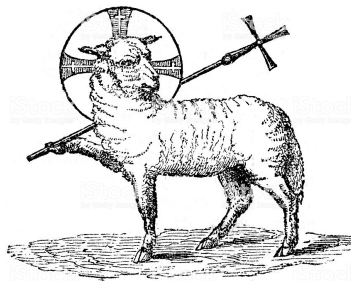


Our Fa-ther, who art in hea-ven, hal-low-ed be thy Name,
 thy king-dom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in hea-ven.
 Give us this day our dai-ly bread. And for-give us our tres-pas-ses,
 as we for-give those who tres-pass a-gainst us. And lead us not in-to
 temp-ta-tion, but de-liv-er us from e-vil. For thine is the king-dom,
 and the power, and the glo-ry, for ev-er and ev-er. A-men.

The Fraction

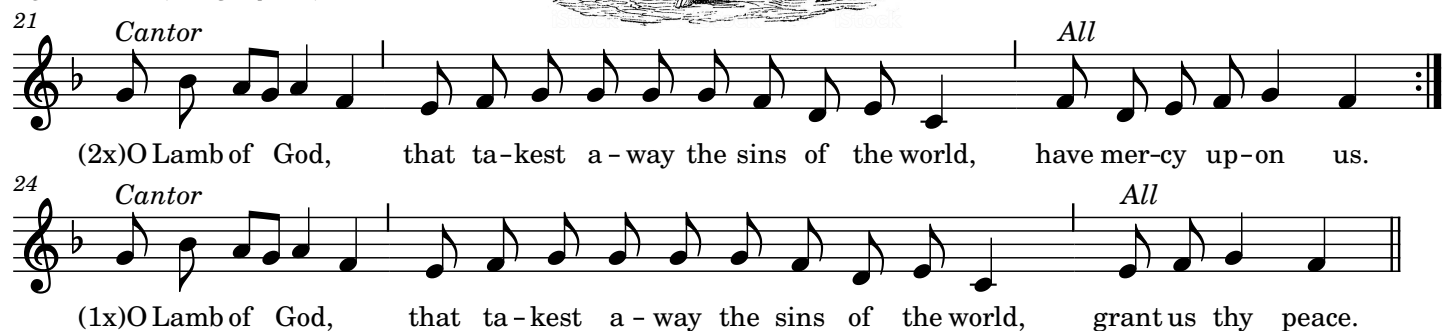


Celebrant
 Al-le-lu-ia. Christ our Pass-o-ver is sac-ri-ficed for us.
People
 There-fore let us keep the feast. Al-le-lu-ia.



Agnus Dei (*sung by all*)

Missa Advenio



21 *Cantor* *All*
 (2x) O Lamb of God, that ta-kest a-way the sins of the world, have mer-cy up-on us.
 24 *Cantor* *All*
 (1x) O Lamb of God, that ta-kest a-way the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

Prayer of Humble Access (*said by all*)

Celebrant: Let us pray.

WE do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

The Invitation to Communion

Celebrant: 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.

People: Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my soul shall be healed.

Communion (*choir*) *Ecce virgo concipiet*

Mode I

BEHOLD, a virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel.

Prayer of Spiritual Communion (*said by those worshipping virtually*)

IN UNION, O Dear Lord, with the faithful at every Altar of Thy Church, where Thy blessed Body and Blood are being offered to the Father, I desire to offer Thee praise and thanksgiving. I present to Thee my soul and body, with the earnest wish that I may ever be united to Thee. And since I cannot now receive Thee sacramentally, I beseech Thee to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself to Thee, and embrace Thee with all the affections of my soul. O let nothing ever separate me from Thee. Let me live and die in Thy love. Amen.



Ecce virgo concipiet

~ Salvador Dali

An Advent Prose (*choir*)

Mode I; arr. J. H. Arnold, 1933

[Antiphon] Drop down, ye heavens from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness. *[Prose]* Be not wroth, very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation: our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee. We have sinned, and are as an unclean thing, and we all do fade as a leaf: and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away; thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us because of our iniquities. Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know me and believe me. I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Savior; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people: my salvation shall not tarry; I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions; fear not, for I will save thee, for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Redeemer.

Isaiah 40-64 passim

Prayer of Thanksgiving after Communion

Celebrant: Let us pray.

People: Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these Holy Mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical Body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

The Advent Blessing and Dismissal

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.*

Deacon: Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

The People respond: Thanks be to God.



The Last Gospel

St. John I:I-I4

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And with thy spirit.

Celebrant: The Beginning of the holy Gospel according to John.

People: Glory be to thee, O Lord.

IN THE BEGINNING was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him: and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men: and the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (*Here genuflect*) And the Word was made flesh, (*Here rise*) and dwelt among us: and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

People: Thanks be to God.

ALMA Redemptóris Mater, quæ pèrvia cæli porta manes, et stella maris, succúrre cadénti, Súrgere qui curat pópulo: Tu quæ genuísti, natúra miránte, tuum sanctum Genitórem, Virgo prius ac postérius, Gabriélis ab ore Sumens illud Ave, peccatórum miserére.

[Loving mother of the Redeemer, gate of heaven, star of the sea, assist your people who have fallen yet strive to rise again, to the wonderment of nature you bore your Creator, yet remained a virgin after as before, You who received Gabriel's joyful greeting, have pity on us poor sinners.]



The Angelus

Celebrant: The Angel of the Lord announced unto Mary.

People: And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

Celebrant: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

People: Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Celebrant: Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

People: Be it unto me according to thy word.

Celebrant: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

People: Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

(Here genuflect) Celebrant: And the Word was made flesh.

(Here rise) People: And dwelt among us.

Celebrant: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

People: Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Celebrant: Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

People: That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

WE beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that, as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his Passion we may be brought unto the glory of his resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



(Dec. 23) 1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som
 (Dec. 17) 2 O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest
 (Dec. 18) 3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy
 (Dec. 19) 4 O come, thou Branch of Jes - se's tree, free them from
 (Dec. 20) 5 O come, thou Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen
 (Dec. 21) 6 O come, thou Day - spring from on high, and cheer us
 (Dec. 22) 7 O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind in one the
 (Dec. 23) 8 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som



1 cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile
 2 all things might - i - ly; to us the path of know - ledge
 3 tribes on Si - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the
 4 Sa - tan's ty - ran - ny that trust thy might - y power to
 5 wide our heaven - ly home; make safe the way that leads on
 6 by thy draw - ing nigh; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of
 7 hearts of all man - kind; bid thou our sad di - vi - sions
 8 cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile



1 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 2 show, and teach us in her ways to go.
 3 law, in cloud, and ma - jes - ty, and awe.
 4 save, and give them vic - tory o'er the grave. Re - joice! Re - joice!
 5 high, and close the path to mis - er - y.
 6 night, and death's dark shad - ow put to flight.
 7 cease, and be thy - self our King of Peace.
 8 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.

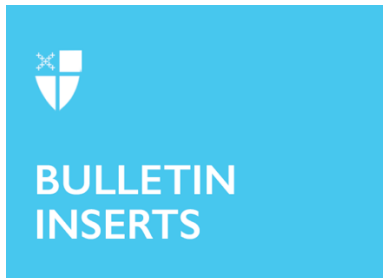


Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

Voluntary: O come, Emmanuel (Variations on an Advent Hymn)

Daniel Pinkham (d. 2006)





December 24, 2023 – Advent 4 (B)
The Presiding Bishop’s Christmas Message

Hello to my family of faith in The Episcopal Church, and to all of our ecumenical and interfaith friends, and to all people of love and goodwill. I want to first thank you all for your prayers and well wishes this year as I have weathered some health issues. Please know that I’m doing well, following the doctor’s orders.

I’m also ever more aware of the power of the messages of Advent to watch, to wait, and to listen to the pregnant voice of silence, as one version of the Bible says. And out of that watching, waiting, and listening, following the way of Jesus of Nazareth and his way of love, the Spirit of God being our helper.

So please allow me to offer a reading from the Gospel according to Luke. You know it well. The deep truth embedded in it, simple story of the birth of a baby. That deep truth has long given me strength for these 70 years, strength that I often did not have on my own. For some, it may seem fanciful, but in its own way, it points to what the Bible calls hope beyond hope. It reads:

While Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to deliver her child. She gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger because there was no place for them in the guest room. Now in that same region, there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. The angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people: To you is born this day in the city of David, a savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: You will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

The message of the angel is as scandalous and striking now as it was then. For in it is embedded God’s message in the death and resurrection of Jesus: to trust and believe in the invincibility of the good in spite of the titanic reality of evil, because God is good all the time. To trust and believe in the enduring power of love, of truth, of the good, and of justice when the reality of the opposite seems so prodigious.

To trust and believe in the enduring power of love, justice, kindness, and compassion, all because God is love and the author of all that is true, noble, and just. “Do not be afraid,” the Scripture says, “for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: To you is born this day in the city of David, a savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: You will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”

Lord, we pray, give us this sign anew. Give us the lowly, the tired, those of high estate and low, and those of no estate. Church folk, those who haven’t stepped through the red doors for years or ever, give us all a sign. Give us the working, the watching, the weeping. Give us that sign anew; as you did in the first century, so now in the 21st. Give us the expected, the faithful, the passionate, the undeserving; give us a sign.

“The angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people: To you is born this day in the city of David, a savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.’”

On behalf of the entire Episcopal Church, we wish you and yours a Merry Christmas and a joyous new year. God love you. God bless you. May God hold us all in those almighty hands of love. Merry Christmas.

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church

Published by the Office of Communication of The Episcopal Church, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017

© 2023 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.



Grace at Christmas



CHRISTMAS EVE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

8:00 P.M. MUSICAL PRELUDE

WITH CAROLS OF THE SEASON

for choir and congregation by candlelight

8:30 P.M. SOLEMN HIGH MASS



Also streamed on Facebook Live:

<https://www.facebook.com/GECHartford>



CHRISTMAS DAY



MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

10:00 A.M. LOW MASS WITH HYMNS

Also streamed on Facebook Live:

<https://www.facebook.com/GECHartford>

GRACE NOTES

December 24 *The Fourth Sunday of Advent*

FOR PASTORAL ASSISTANCE

THE REV. ROWENA KEMP welcomes hearing from you. Please don't hesitate to contact her if there's something you'd like to discuss, and please contact her immediately, should there be an illness, hospitalization, or any other pastoral emergency that she should know about. [For such emergencies, please note Rev. Rowena's cell phone number: 203-209-4178.]

PEOPLE AND PLACES TO KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

A reminder: Tori Burns manages this list for us, and prayer requests need to be renewed after 2 weeks. Please communicate all prayer requests & updates with her (860-539-8790): (tburns@gracehartford.org).

- *Bishops and Clergy:* Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury; Michael, Presiding Bishop; Jeffrey and Laura, Bishops of ECCT; and Rowena, Jerry, Annika, and Joseph, our priests.
- *Diocesan Cycle of Prayer:* **We pray for an increase in the membership of this parish, that we may have the hands and hearts to carry out thy will;** for the Episcopal Church in CT & the Anglican Communion; St. Luke/St. Paul, Bridgeport; St. John's, Bridgeport; St. Mark's, Bridgeport; the children of the world, the Bishops' Fund for Children, and all ECCT ministries for children at risk. *The Episcopal Church in the Philippines.*
- *World & Community Concerns:* For peace throughout the world, especially between Israel and Gaza and in the Middle East; in Sudan; and between Russia and Ukraine; for Christians being persecuted around the world, particularly in China and Palestine; for those who are suffering because of extreme climate; for the hungry and poor in our midst; and the volunteers who serve *A Place of Grace* food pantry.
- *Serving Our Country in the Military (especially those associated with Grace Church):* Brian, Spencer, Bradley, Curtis, Jordan, John, Carrington, William, Noel, James, Ryan, Michael, Karl, Alec, Jeff, David, Tom, Michael, and Charles.
- *Thanksgiving and Celebrations:* We give thanks and ask for thy blessings upon Kenneth Brown (Mon.), and Nadia Holmes (Wed.), whose birthdays we celebrate this week; and Paul Kline & Fr. Max Maxwell, celebrating their 24th wedding anniversary on Saturday.
- *Sick or in need:* Richard; Adrienne & Ken; Sr. Linda Giuli; Pamela & Bob; Tom & Elaine; Josephine, Melissa & Jaden; Sally; Jerry; Bonnie & the Burns Family; Errol, Norma & the Kemp Family; Ellen; Barbara; Nigel, Kraig & Deidre; Dick, Leanne, Aldon, Kim & Fiona; Carmen & Félix; Mary; Monica; Antoinette; Julia, Mike, André & Maria; Linda & the Galarza Family; Leonard; Joy; David; Maureen & the Blake Family; Chazmin; Miguelina & Family, Anthony & Gail, Cori and the Mackey Family; Brad, Mary, & Leslie; Joe; Margaret; Judy; Peter; Doug; Jane; Bill, Carolyn & Susan; Lynn; McJohn; Doreen; Karen; Terra; Ted; Kanata; Betty & John; Mary & Lou; Nelda Sue; Nazra; Diane; Nina; Ellen and Jim; Lauren, Alexandra & Anna; Mark & Diane; Jean; and all victims of natural and man-made disasters.
- *The Deceased:* We pray for the repose of Michael J. Sullivan Sr., Leonie McCartney, all soldiers and civilians killed in war or civil strife, and in memory of Ronald Merriman, Claire Hébert, and all those remembered in our Christmas Memorials.

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

THE REV. ROWENA J. KEMP, RECTOR

55 New Park Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106-2123

Church telephone: 860-233-0825 Church fax: 860-233-5082 Rectory telephone: 860-994-5022

Rector's cell phone: 203-209-4178 Rector's email: RevRowena@gracehartford.org

Church e-mail: church@gracehartford.org Website: www.gracehartford.org



Visit "Grace Episcopal Church, Hartford, CT" on FACEBOOK.
Please join and help us spread the good news online!



THIS WEEK AT GRACE

Sunday, December 24 *The Fourth Sunday of Advent*

8:00 a.m.: Low Mass

10:30 a.m.: Sung Mass (also on Facebook Live)

✨ CHRISTMAS EVE ✨

THE VIGIL OF THE NATIVITY

8:00 p.m. Musical Prelude with Carols of the Season for Choir and Congregation
(also on Facebook Live)

8:30 p.m. Solemn High Mass (also on Facebook Live), followed by reception

Monday, December 25 *THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST*

✨ CHRISTMAS DAY ✨

10:00 a.m.: Low Mass with Hymns (also on Facebook Live)

Wednesday, December 27 *SAINT JOHN APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST*

9:15 a.m.: Low Mass (also on Facebook Live), followed by breakfast at Effie's

Thursday, December 28 *THE HOLY INNOCENTS*

10:00 a.m.: "A Place of Grace" food pantry distribution

6:00 p.m.: EVENSONG BY HAVEN

Sunday, December 31 *The First Sunday after Christmas Day*

8:00 a.m.: Low Mass

10:30 a.m.: Sung Mass (also on Facebook Live)



Visit "[Grace Episcopal Church, Hartford CT](#)" on FACEBOOK

Please join, and help us spread the good news online!



The Holy Innocents

Evensong by Haven

December 28th, 6:00 P.M.

at Grace Episcopal Church

