



# St. John's Episcopal Church

## Hear the Spirit ~ See God's Beauty ~ Act in Love

*The Fourth Sunday of Advent*  
December 21, 2025 10am

### ORDER OF WORSHIP

**Prelude** *Fantasia on Veni, Veni Emmanuel*

Alec Rowley (1892-1958)

### THE WORD OF GOD

**Opening Hymn #56** *O come, O come, Emmanuel*, verses 1-7

VENI, VENI, EMMANUEL

### Opening Acclamation

*Presider*      Blessed are you, holy and living One.

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

### Collect for Purity

### The Collect of the Day

*Presider*      The Lord be with you

*People*      **And also with you.**

*Presider*      Let us pray.

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### Bidding Prayer

Beloved in Christ, in this season of Advent, let it be our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the Angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

*Please be seated for the readings.*



## **First Reading** Isaiah 7:10-16

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

*Reader  
People*      The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

# The Christmas Pageant

*Our Christmas Pageant takes the place of the remainder of the Liturgy of the Word, as the children of the congregation proclaim the good news of Christ's coming birth.*

*During the pageant, please join in singing the carols: you can find them in the hymnal, as printed below.*

## **Hymn #265** *The angel Gabriel from heaven came vss. 1-3*

## **Hymn #79** *O little town of Bethlehem* vs. 1

## **Hymn #101** *Away in a manger vss. 1-3*

## **Hymn #96 *Angels we have heard on high vss. 1 and 3***

## **Hymn #100** *Joy to the world!* vs. 1

## **Hymn #128** *We three kings of Orient are* vss. 1 and 5

## Closing Prayer

## 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**

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth,  
live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

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 your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its  
resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, especially Bridget, Lyn, Megan, Markus, Cecilia, Elizabeth, Lin, David, Alicia and Renee and all those we now name either silently or aloud.

Give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

We commend to your mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and we pray that we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

*The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.*

### **Confession of Sin**

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Silence*

*Minister and People*

**Most merciful God,**

**we confess that we have sinned against you**

**in thought, word, and deed,**

**by what we have done,**

**and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;**

**we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.**

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,**

**have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will,  
and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

*The Priest stands and says*

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

## The Peace

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

All are invited to exchange greetings of peace.

## Welcome and Announcements of our Ministries

The Rector

### Offertory Hymn #73 *The King shall come when morning dawns*

ST. STEPHEN



During the Offertory Hymn, our ushers will pass the collection plate. You are welcome to make an offering by leaving cash or a check in the plate, or by scanning the QR code to donate online via Tithe.ly.

Whether you are able to support our ministry financially or not, please know that you are invited to full participation in this church on exactly the same terms and conditions as God's grace and love: completely free of charge.

## THE HOLY COMMUNION

### The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

The Presider gives thanks to God, continuing until the words

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name.

### The Sanctus S-114

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God of

Hosts: Hea - ven and earth are full - of thy glo - ry. Glo -

ry be to thee, O Lord Most High. Bless - ed is he that com - eth

in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*The Presider continues the Eucharistic Prayer, until the words*  
Therefore, according to his command, O Father,  
**We remember his death,**  
**We proclaim his resurrection,**  
**We await his coming in glory.**

*The Presider continues the Eucharistic Prayer, concluding the words*  
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.**

*Presider* 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. A period of silence is kept.*

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

**Communion Anthems** *A tender shoot*  
*Infant holy, infant lowly*

Otto Goldschmidt (1829-1907)  
Traditional Polish carol

*All who seek to receive Christ in the sacrament of this meal are welcome to partake of the bread and wine. Please come to the altar up the center aisle and return to your pew down the side aisles. You are welcome to receive both the bread and the wine, bread only, or a blessing. To receive the bread, stand or kneel at the altar rail and the priest will place the host in your hands. The wine is available either from the common cup, or in individually pre-packaged containers on small tables at either end of the altar rail. To receive the wine from the pre-packaged cup, open the foil seal at the top of the container, drink the wine, and place the empty cup into the basket.*

### **The Postcommunion Prayer** *Please stand as able.*

*Presider* Let us pray.

*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.**

## The Blessing

### Closing Hymn #99

*Go tell it on the mountain*

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

## The Dismissal

*Presider* Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

### Postlude Variation on a French Noel

Louis-Claude Daquin (1694-1772)

*The flowers on the altar today were arranged by Robin Moody*

### Ministers Serving Today:

The Rev. Greg Johnston, Presider

Douglas Witte, Organist and Choir Director

Paul Tompros, Vestry Person of the Day

Kate Gunsch, Reader

Duncan Holbrook-Smith, Intercessor

August Holbrook-Smith, Chalice

Matt Hast and Joanne Graziano, Ushers

Robin Moody, Altar Guild

Brendan and Birgitta Ryback and Duncan and August Holbrook-Smith, Coffee Hour Hosts

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you to Nancy Savage and to the children of Saint John's for organizing and leading this year's Christmas Pageant! You are invited to join us as we celebrate Christmas:

### **Wednesday, December 24 ~ 4pm**

Holy Eucharist for Christmas Eve

### **Thursday, December 25 ~ 10am**

Holy Eucharist for Christmas Day

### **Sunday, December 28 ~ 10am**

The First Sunday after Christmas Day

**ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

27 Devens Street, Charlestown, MA 02129

617-242-1272 | [stjohns02129@gmail.com](mailto:stjohns02129@gmail.com) | [www.stjohns02129.org](http://www.stjohns02129.org)

The Rev. Gregory Johnston, Rector

Mr. Douglas Witte, Organist and Choirmaster

Ms. Nancy Savage, Godly Play Teacher

Ms. Priscilla Burns, Parish Administrator

Mr. Brian O'Neill, Sexton

Mr. Matt Hast and Mr. Simon Ringrose, Warden