

All Angels Episcopal Church

8:00 and 10:00 Sunday Morning

December 20, 2020

Fourth Sunday of Advent



*“I am the Lord’s servant.
Let it be with me just as you have said.”*
Luke 1:38

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The Rev. David J. Marshall
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Our mission is to bring the living Christ to those
inside and outside the church.

Prelude

Dale Hooey

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. *Isaiah 9:2, 6*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

A brief silence

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.

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.**

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Hymn of Praise *O Come O Come, Emmanuel* verses 1 & 2

Hymnal #56

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

The Lord be with you

And also with you.

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.**

The Lessons *Please be seated for the reading of the lessons*

A reading from Paul's Letter to the Romans

Romans 16:25-27

May the glory be to God who can strengthen you with my good news and the message that I preach about Jesus Christ. He can strengthen you with the announcement of the secret that was kept quiet for a long time. Now that secret is revealed through what the prophets wrote. It is made known to the Gentiles in order to lead to their faithful obedience based on the command of the eternal God. May the glory be to God, who alone is wise! May the glory be to him through Jesus Christ forever! Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The psalm for this morning is Canticle 15. It can be found in your bulletin and in your prayer books on page 91. Let us read it responsively by half verse. *Luke 1:46-55*

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.**

Please stand

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Luke 1:26-38

When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David's house. The virgin's name was Mary. When the angel came to her, he said, "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!" She was confused by these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. He will rule over Jacob's house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom." Then Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen since I haven't had sexual relations with a man?" The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy. He will be called God's Son. Look, even in her old age, your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son. This woman who was labeled 'unable to conceive' is now six months pregnant. Nothing is impossible for God." Then Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said." Then the angel left her.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon

The Rev. Dave Marshall

The Nicene Creed

BCP 358

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.

The Prayers of the People *Please be seated*

As we await the coming of Christ, let us open our hearts in prayer for those in need; and pray with the words of Mary who rejoices in the strength of God's arm.

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.**

Anoint your Church with your Holy Spirit. Make it radiant with holiness, lovely with compassion, and bright with faithfulness. Fill it with hope as it awaits the coming of your Son in power and great glory.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

The Almighty has done great things for me, **and holy is his Name.**

We thank you God for all the great things that have been done for us; for our families, our lives, and for our church. Anoint this congregation to share and help those in need in our community and anoint the service organizations in our area that help generations of people in need.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

He has mercy on those who fear him **in every generation.**

Show the strength of your arm and bring restoration of mind, body, and soul, to those in need, especially: Downs IV, Holden, Nikolai, Brian and Joan. Grant healing and recovery for all who have gone through surgery, especially Holly. Give peace and strength for those going through cancer treatments, especially John, Victoria, Andres, Ginny, Alex, Colleen, Jack and Breanna. Visit and comfort all who are under the care of skilled nursing, especially Bob, Timothy, Don, Barbara and Mike. Be near to all who are in hospice care.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

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.**

Give wisdom, prudence, and humility to those who lead the nations, and to our local and state leaders. Show the strength in your arm in how we treat our neighbors and those who wish to do us harm.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel,
for he has remembered his promise of mercy.

Come to the help of all the people of the Jewish faith and especially watch over Temple Beth Israel. Remember your promise of mercy and protect all the faithful who are persecuted for their faith especially for the Church in North Korea, Afghanistan, Somalia, Libya, Pakistan, Eritrea, Sudan and Iran.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

The promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Help our nation remember and fulfill the promise made to those who serve in our armed forces, fire and police departments, and to first responders. Grant healing to those who have been wounded; patience and hope to their loved ones.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Almighty God, we grieve for our dead, but not without hope. Thank you for receiving them into your merciful care, especially those we name now. *Silence*

Show the strength of your arm and comfort all who mourn, give them a crown in place of ashes, the oil of joy in place of mourning, and a mantle of praise in place of discouragement.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Hasten the coming of thy kingdom; and grant that we thy servants, who now live by faith, may with joy behold thy Son at his coming in glorious majesty; through Jesus, our only Mediator and Advocate. **Amen.**

Musical Reflection

Dale Hooey

Greetings, Announcements and Introductions

Offertory Reflection

Dale Hooey

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise him all creatures here below,
Praise him above ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

The Holy Eucharist Prayer B

BCP 367

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. For by water and the Holy Spirit you have made us a new people in Jesus Christ our Lord, to show forth your glory in all the world. 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.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,
 heaven and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est.

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 he was handed over to suffering and death, 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 now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,
**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
 thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
 on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread.

**And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.
 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.**

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Let us pray,

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that through thy grace, the words which we have heard this day may be grafted inwardly in our hearts and bring forth in us the fruit of good living, and the gifts of your Kingdom, to the honor and praise of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing

Recessional Hymn #438 *Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord*

1982 Hymnal

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord! Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice; tender to me the promise of his word; in God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his Name! Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done; his mercy sure, from age the same; his holy Name-the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might! Powers and dominions lay their glory by. Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight, the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word! Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord to children's children and for evermore!

Announcements

Blue Christmas a service for those who are feeling blue, Wednesday, December 23, 7 pm.

Upcoming Programs in the Park

Thursday, December 24 11 am Music in the Park, Christmas Readings and Carols

Readers: Alison Jones and John Gill, Vocalist: Joyce

Thursday, December 24 5 pm Christmas Eve Service

Musical prelude: Kei Sulhi, vocalist, Dale, organist

5:30 Christ Mass

No services Christmas Day

Thursday, December 31 11 a.m. Music in the Park, Christmas Pops!

Organ music: Frosty, Rudolph, Jingle Bells, etc.

Thursday, January 7, 11 a.m. Music in the Park, Epiphany Readings and Carols

Reader: Justus Doenecke

Vocalist: Joyce

Centering Prayer Centering Prayer invites you to pray with them, every day, at 8 am, wherever you are. When you enter into prayer at 8 am (Eastern), you will know that others are praying at the same time.

Artist of the Month - The artist for December and January is Linda Larisch. Please stop by and enjoy the work of this talented artist. All checks should be written to "All Angels by the Sea."

Birthdays & Anniversaries If you have a birthday or anniversary coming up next month, please email Linn Torres at lt@allangelslbk.org

Video of Today's Service, Discussion Group Articles and our weekly Tidings can all be found on our website: www.allangelslbk.org.

Reflection

The 4th Week

I'd like to give a shout out to the 4th week of Advent. It's the week that really gets overshadowed by the looming and unstoppable presence of Christmas Eve. Starting on December 20th this year, the 4th week ends abruptly on sundown on the 24th. That is usually how the fourth week of Advent goes – it's never a full week. Most people, myself included, start saying Merry Christmas during the 4th week. I've been trying my best to say, "Happy Advent" this year but honestly, after Sunday, that all goes out the window.

The 4th week of Advent is when we remember the stories of Elizabeth and Zachariah – surprise parents of John the Baptizer, and Mary and Joseph – surprise parents of the Messiah. The main emphasis for this week centers on the Biblical phrase, "How can this be?!" The first to utter that phrase was Temple priest Zachariah, who in his old age, had been unable to give his wife Elizabeth a child. The culture back then had it so that being childless was a negative thing; especially so if one held such a high esteemed position as Temple priest. As the story goes, Zachariah was randomly chosen to bring the incense into the high vault of the Temple. It was the highest honor for a priest to do. While in the room, an angel spoke to him and said that he was going to have a son. "How can this be!?" he exclaimed.

This week we hear about the angel Gabriel visiting Mary and telling her she is going to have a son. Again, same reaction – how can this be – but for a different reason. Zachariah believed he was too old to have a child; Mary believed she was too young. God saw it differently.

I am writing this to you on my son Ethan's birthday. He turns 18 years old today! I remember vividly where Christi and I were when she told me that she was pregnant. It was our own, *how can this be*, moment. We had just adopted our two girls from Russia. We were trying to settle into being brand new parents with kids who had recently turned 16 and 11 years old. And now this! How can it be?!

When Zachariah found out he was going to be a dad, his life, and the world, was never the same. Likewise, when Mary found out she was going to be pregnant, her life, and the world, were never going to be the same. That feeling is echoed through every family that finds out they will be parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, godparents. ... and the world will never be the same.

The 4th week of Advent is the shortest and frankly gets very little credit; but, this week may be the most important of the Advent season because it is when we, and the world, find out we will never be the same.

- Fr. Dave