

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Third Sunday of Advent

December 14, 2025

The Holy Eucharist

Prelude

Toccata

Georg Muffat
(1645-1704)

Opening Hymn

72 Hark! the glad sound! the Savior comes

1 Hark, the glad sound! the Savior comes,
the Savior promised long:
let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song.

2 He comes, the prisoners to release
in Satan's bondage held;
the gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.

3 He comes, the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure;
and with the treasures of his grace
to enrich the humble poor.

4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
thy welcome shall proclaim;
and heaven's eternal arches ring
with thy beloved Name.

The Opening Acclamation

Priest Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

The Collect for Purity

All 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.

Kyrie S96

Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.
 Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord,
 Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.

Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy. Lord,
 Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

Lord, have mer - cy, have mer - cy.
 Lord, have mer - cy, have mer - cy.

Music: From *Deutsche Messe*; Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828); arr. Richard Proulx (b. 1937). Copyright © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc.

The Collect of the Day

Priest The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Priest Let us pray.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily

help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever.

People **Amen.**

The Readings

All may sit.

The First Lesson: Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

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

Psalm 146:4-9 *Lauda, anima mea*

Ivor Algernon Atkins (1869–1953)



- 4 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! *
whose hope is in the LORD their God;
- 5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; *
who keeps his promise for ever;
- 6 Who gives justice to those who are op-pressed, *
and food to those who hunger.
- 7 The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind; *
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
- 8 The LORD loves the righteous; the LORD cares for the stranger; *
he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.
- 9 The LORD shall reign for ever, *
your God, O Zion, throughout all gene-rations. Halle- lujah!

The Epistle: James 5:7-10

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is

near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

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

All may stand.

Sequence Hymn LEVAS 14 Soon and very soon

1 Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King!

2 No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,
No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,
No more cryin' there we are goin' to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, we're goin' to see the King!

3 Nore more dyin' there we are goin' to see the King,
Nore more dyin' there we are goin' to see the King,
Nore more dyin' there we are goin' to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah.

4 Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King;
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Soon and very soon we are goin' to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah.

The Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

Gospeler The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ, according to Matthew.
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

“Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

Gospeler The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

All may sit.

The Sermon

A message usually based on the readings and their relevancy to life today.

All may stand.

The Nicene Creed

Creed comes from the Latin ‘Credo’, ‘I believe.’, The Nicene Creed was created in the formative years of the Church, to be a symbol of common faith. It pertains to the Holy Trinity – a core belief which distinguishes Christianity from other faith traditions.

**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 and the Son,**

**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.

The Prayers of the People

The community of the Church is called to pray in Christ's name for the needs of the world.

Standing for the Prayers is a sign of our calling to be a corporate priestly community (the priesthood of all believers), praying for those needs.

*The petitions in the Prayers of the People end with the phrase, "Let us pray to our God." You are invited to respond "**Christ have mercy.**"*

Confession of Sin

In preparation for receiving Holy Communion, we acknowledge our failings with God and with each other, and seek healing and forgiveness.

The Deacon or Priest says

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Clergy 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 Bishop, when present, or 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

The Peace is meant as an encounter with Christ in others, and a reconciliation with one another and with ourselves in anticipation of the kingdom of God.

Priest The peace of Christ be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

Then the Ministers and People greet one another in the name of the Lord.

All may sit.

Greeting

The Holy Communion

Offertory Anthem

There shall a star from Jacob come forth

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

Offertory Hymn 66 Come, thou long-expected Jesus

1 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.

2 Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art:
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

3 Born thy people to deliver,
born a child, and yet a king,
born to reign in us for ever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

4 By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer A (*BCP*, p.361)

This is the prayer of blessing over the bread and wine, based on Jewish table prayers. It begins with the priest inviting the people to join giving thanks, since the whole congregation are together “celebrants.”

The People remain standing.

Celebrant The Lord be with you. *People* And al - so 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 him thanks and praise.

Setting: Copyright © Church Publishing Inc.

Priest It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. . . . 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:

Sanctus S130

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
 Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
 Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
 might,———
 Holy, holy, holy Lord,

Music score for two voices (Soprano and Bass) in G minor, 4/4 time. The score consists of eight staves of music with corresponding lyrics.

Soprano (Top Staff):

- God of power and might, _____
- heaven and earth are
- full, _____
- full of your glo - ry. Ho -
- san - na in the high - est. 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.

Bass (Bottom Staff):

- God of power and might, _____
- heaven and earth are
- full, _____
- full of your glo - ry. Ho -
- san - na in the high - est. 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.

Music: From *Deutsche Messe*, Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828); arr. Richard Proulx (b. 1937). Copyright © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc.

The Celebrant continues

Celebrant: We give thanks to you, O God...Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

People: **We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory**

Celebrant: And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving....all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.

People: **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Priest And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People and Priest

**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.**

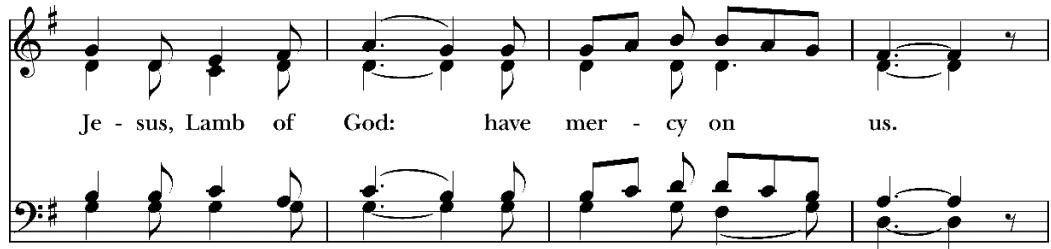
The Breaking of the Bread

This is a sign that the bread is to be shared by all.

Priest: We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

People: **We who are many are one body, for we all share in the one bread.**

Agnus Dei S164



Je - sus, Lamb of God: have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, bear - er of our sins: have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, re - deem - er, re - deem - er of the world:

give us your peace, give us your peace.

Music: From *Deutsche Messe*; Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828); arr. Richard Proulx (b. 1937). Adaptation: Copyright © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc.

The Communion of the People

All who seek God, and are drawn to Christ, are welcome at his table. If you do not wish to receive Communion, but desire a blessing from the priest, simply cross your arms across your chest to indicate this, and the priest will say a prayer of blessing over you. If you require a gluten-free communion wafer, please go to one of the Communion stations at the front of the church. Wine may be consumed from the chalice. Intinction, the dipping of the bread into the wine, is NOT allowed.

Communion Hymn 58 Lo! he comes, with clouds descending

1 Lo! he comes with clouds descending,
once for our salvation slain;
thousand, thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ the Lord returns to reign.

2 Every eye shall now behold him,
robed in dreadful majesty;

those who set at nought and sold him,
pierced, and nailed him to the tree,
deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
shall the true Messiah see.

3 Those dear tokens of his passion
still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation
to his ransomed worshipers;
with what rapture, with what rapture,
gaze we on those glorious scars!

4 Yea, amen! let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the power and glory;
claim the kingdom for thine own:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

Postcommunion Prayer

This prayer gives thanks for the gift of Communion, that it may bear fruit in daily life.

All **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

The traditional ending of the service. We are reminded that God is with us and empowering us.

Recessional Hymn 74 Blest be the King whose coming

1 Blest be the King whose coming
is in the name of God!
For him let doors be opened,
no hearts against him barred!
Not robed in royal splendor,
in power and pomp, comes he;
but clad as are the poorest,
such his humility!

2 Blest be the King whose coming
is in the name of God!
By those who truly listen
his voice is truly heard;
pity the proud and haughty,
who have not learned to heed
the Christ who is the Promise,
who has atonement made.

3 Blest be the King whose coming
is in the name of God!
He only to the humble
reveals the face of God.
All power is his, all glory!
All things are in his hand,
all ages and all peoples,
till time itself shall end!

4 Blest be the King whose coming
is in the name of God!
He offers to the burdened
the rest and grace they need.
Gentle is he and humble!
And light his yoke shall be,
for he would have us bear it
so he can make us free.

Dismissal

At the point of leaving, the Church sends us forth. In Christ's name we are sent out for mission and service in daily life.

Deacon Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Fugue and Allegro

Johann Pachelbel
(1653-1706)