



ST. GREGORY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

radiates God's grace, equipping all people to change the world.

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Vocalists:
Viki Rill, Kathryn Duncan,
Cameo Humes, Keanon Kyles

The Second Sunday of Advent
December 4, 2022 | 9:30am

PREPARE
the way of the
LORD



St. Gregory's Episcopal Church
815 Wilmot Rd, Deerfield, IL 60015

www.StGsChurch.org

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Welcome to St Gregory's

If you are visiting, we invite you to take a Welcome Card from the pew holder, and if you are willing, fill it out and put it in the offering plate or give it to a greeter so that we might thank you for worshipping with us. All are truly welcome to participate in worship, and we believe our community is made stronger by your unique presence as we join in prayer and communion.

Our Worship

In the Episcopal Church, we often say that praying shapes believing, so how we worship in word and action shapes how we believe and respond to God. We are physical creatures made in God's image, and the physical nature of our worship helps us to connect more fully to God. Therefore, at St. Gregory's, we change our liturgy during each liturgical season to help us more fully embrace the theology and tone of the season.

Our sacred time of worship includes several different activities: singing, listening, praying, and feasting. This liturgy is enriched by the participation of everyone in the room. **All are invited to speak the bolded text aloud.** Some people choose to manifest prayers in physical ways to center their hearts and minds on God's presence in their lives and in the worship – we call these actions “manual acts,” which are listed as follows throughout the bulletin:

(v) Bowing one's head at Jesus' name reminds us that Jesus is the King of Kings, ruling from a place of humility.

(+) There are several points during the liturgy, where many people cross themselves by touching their head, chest, and each shoulder (left then right) to remind themselves that God is in their head, heart, and in all of their actions in the world.

(+++) At the declaration of the Gospel, many people make the sign of the cross with their thumb on their forehead, lips, and heart as the Gospel is announced. This action is a prayer asking God's word to be in our minds, our words, and in our hearts.

Generally speaking, we stand to pray, kneel to confess, and sit to hear. Regardless of what others are doing, how you physically worship is up to you and how you experience God. Your presence and participation is what matters most to God.

A Note about the Season of Advent

During Advent, our liturgical color at St. Gregory's is blue, and you will see this reflected in the vestments (special clothing worn by clergy), and on the altar and pulpit hangings. An Advent wreath decorates our worship space, a custom that can be traced back to German tradition. Over time, people have assigned meaning to each of the four candles, and many argue about what color they should be. Liturgical scholar Patrick Malloy reminds us, “The principle symbolism of the wreath is the dispelling of darkness as an additional candle is lighted each week, not the color of the candles.”

Because this is a season of preparation, we prepare our hearts, minds, and souls to meet Jesus face to face. We build space into our liturgy to examine the coming of Christ, and to make space in our lives for how Christ will change us. Therefore, we have several periods of silence during our worship, to slow down in this season the world insists on filling with stress and noise, and draw us back into the presence of God. You are invited to observe the sacred silence in any way that settles your soul in God's presence: praying, breathing, doodling, or just watching the candles flicker in anticipation.

In this season, it is our hope that our worship will give us a new appreciation of Christ's presence in our lives, and new words to express our longing for and appreciation of God come among us.



THE WORD OF GOD

We begin our worship by observing a period of quiet (begun and ended with the ringing of a bell) to slow ourselves and rest in God's presence.

The people stand, as they are able. All are invited to speak the bolded text aloud.

ENTRANCE HYMN



1 There's a voice in the wil - der - ness cry - ing, a
3 But the word of our God en - du - reth, the



call from the ways un - trod: Pre - pare in the des - ert a
arm of the Lord is strong; he stands in the midst of



high - way, a high - way for our God! The
na - tions, and he will right the wrong. He shall



val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed, the
feed his flock like a shep - herd, the



lof - ty hills brought low; make straight all the crook - ed
lambs he'll gent - ly hold; to pas - tures of peace he'll



pla - ces where the Lord our God may go!
lead them, and bring them safe to his fold.



We begin our worship by gathering together as the body of Christ, and acknowledging our participation together in the Body of Christ.

The Presider invites us to praise God together. The Collect for Purity allows us to acknowledge that the ability to celebrate the liturgy depends on God's grace.

OPENING ACCLAMATION & COLLECT FOR PURITY

The priest chants and the people sing the responses.

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and blessed be God's kingdom,

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. (v)

This Advent season, our Song of Praise is the Magnificat, Mary's song of God's promise.

SONG OF PRAISE

The cantor chants and the people respond with the sung antiphon.

Antiphon

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. **Antiphon** 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 forever. 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. **Antiphon**

We are invited to pray, and then the collect collects our prayers together in a single concluding prayer tailored toward the church season. In this season of Advent, we are called to prepare our hearts to be places where the Christ child could be born anew and find a welcome home.

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; (v) who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**



The people sit.

We follow a three-year cycle of readings called a Lectionary. These are lessons being heard in congregations from many denominations throughout the world on this day. The first reading is from the Hebrew Scriptures, which tell us the story of God's love and faithfulness to God's people from the beginning of time to just before Christ.

FIRST READING

ISAIAH 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



The Psalm is a hymn or poem. The psalms cover the whole range of the relationship between God and God's people. The Book of Psalms, while a "book" of the Bible, consists of 150 hymns intended to be sung.

PSALM 72

Chanted by the cantor.

- 1 Give the Ruler your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the Ruler's heir;
- 2 That they may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;
- 3 That the mountains may bring prosperity,
and the little hills bring righteousness.
- 4 They shall defend the needy and rescue the poor.
- 5 They shall live as long as the sun endures.
- 6 They shall come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.
- 7 In their time shall the righteous flourish;
there shall be peace till the moon shall be no more.
- 18 Blessed be the Sovereign God, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous deeds!
- 19 And blessed be God's glorious Name for ever!
and may all the earth be filled with their glory.

The Second Lesson is usually a reading from one of the New Testament Epistles (or letters), though occasionally from the Acts of the Apostles or the Book of Revelation. They teach us about the formation of the church and instruct us on how to live into our role as followers of Christ.

THE EPISTLE

ROMANS 15:4-13

Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles,
and sing praises to your name";

and again he says,
"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people";

and again,
"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him";

and again Isaiah says,
"The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the Gentiles;
in him the Gentiles shall hope."

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



The people stand, as they are able. Children are invited to join the procession in the aisle for the reading of the Gospel.

SEQUENCE HYMN

Cantor Come, light of my heart. All I will lift my soul to you, O
 God; nev - er let me come to shame. I place all my trust in you, O
 God; make your ways and truth known to me. A - men, a - men.

During the Holy Eucharist, there is always a reading from a Gospel. We stand to indicate the importance we place on Jesus' words and actions. The deacon or priest proclaims the Gospel in the midst of the people to represent the Good News that Jesus has come among us, and we all turn toward it.

THE GOSPEL

MATTHEW 3:1-12

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, (v) according to Matthew.

Glory to you, Lord Christ. (+++)

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
 'Prepare the way of the Lord,
 make his paths straight.'"

Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

"I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

The Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The people sit.



The sermon is meant to help us make the Word of God a living and transforming reality of our lives today.

In the Nicene Creed, we respond to the proclamation of God's Word by affirming the historic faith of the Church. We "believe" (from the Latin credere, literally "to put one's heart into") because we offer our trust in the story of God's creating, redeeming, and remaining with the world. "We" believe because the church as a whole, the Body of Christ, carries and strengthens the faith of each individual.

The Prayers of the People are always responsive, because everyone gives voice to the supplications. We include prayers for others throughout the world, in our diocese, and those connected to our congregation. This is the part of the liturgy where it is most evident that we would be noticeably less without the contributions of each person present. We voice prayers from our parish prayer list, as well as requests from the onsite and online worshippers.

SERMON

The Rev. Anne B. Jolly, Rector

A period of quiet (begun and ended with the ringing of a bell) is observed to slow ourselves and rest in God's presence.

The people stand, as they are able.

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, (v) 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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Confident of God's faithfulness, ready to produce the good fruit of repentance, let us pray for the coming of Christ, saying:

Come, Emmanuel, God-with-us.

For a spirit of conversion and hope among the people of God (prayers of joy and gratitude), we pray:

Come, Emmanuel, God-with-us.

For a spirit of counsel, wisdom and understanding among the leaders of our country and those of all nations, we pray:

Come, Emmanuel, God-with-us.

For the gifts of justice and righteousness among the poor and afflicted, we pray:

Come, Emmanuel, God-with-us.



For an outpouring of hope and healing upon the sick (prayers for the sick, sad, lonely or afraid), we pray:

Come, Emmanuel, God-with-us.

For a spirit of watchfulness and prayer within this assembly, we pray:

Come, Emmanuel, God-with-us.

For a place in God's glorious dwelling for the dead (prayers for the dead or the dying), we pray:

Come, Emmanuel, God-with-us.

Hear our prayers, God of glory, and cleanse us with the fire of your Spirit. Gird us with faithfulness and bind us in justice, that we may rejoice at the return of Christ our Savior, (v) who lives and reigns now and forever. **Amen.**

Almighty God, You who called the universe into being, You who formed our inmost being and called us to be your people: assist us in living hopefully into the future. In the face of change, help us to set fears aside and to recognize our potential for creative response because we are made in your image. Help us to guard against our own defensiveness when confronted by changes and challenges, and instead listen to your still, small voice, and to lean toward your hope. Be with us as we remember and celebrate former times, and keep us from unreasonable yearning for them, which takes us from the work you have set before us in this time. All this we ask in the name of your Child, our Savior, Jesus Christ. (v) **Amen.**

In the confession we admit the ways we have not lived as we were created to live, both individually, and corporately, and ask for forgiveness. The priest declares to us the wonderful grace of God's promise of forgiveness, reconciliation, and the absolute remission of guilt.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

The people kneel as they are able. Silence will be kept.

**Merciful God, we have sinned
in what we have thought and said,
in the wrong we have done
and in the good we have not done.**

**We have sinned in ignorance:
we have sinned in weakness:
we have sinned through our own deliberate fault.**

**We are truly sorry.
We repent and turn to you.
Forgive us, for our Savior Christ's sake,
and renew our lives to the glory of your name. Amen.**

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



The Peace has been exchanged at the Eucharist since the time of the first Christians. It is a profound act to offer the miraculous peace of God to one another before we join in communion with God and each other.

THE PEACE

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

The congregation greets each other in the peace of Christ.

The people sit.

PRAYERS FOR BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES, AND TRAVELS

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

"E'en So, Lord Jesus" by Paul Manz

Peace be to you and grace from Him who freed us from our sins,
Who loved us all and shed His blood that we might saved be.
Sing Holy, Holy to our Lord, the Lord Almighty God,
Who was and is and is to come; sing Holy, Holy, Lord!
Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein, rejoice on earth, ye saints below,
For Christ is coming, is coming soon!
E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come, and night shall be no more;
They need no light nor lamp nor sun, for Christ will be their All.

The Offertory is when we bring our gifts of bread, wine, money, and our very selves to present to the Lord as our initial act of thanksgiving. This collection is a visible reminder that our whole lives are God's, and a part of what God has given us we give back in thanksgiving for all that we have and all that we are. You can use this QR code to give to StGs online.



THE HOLY COMMUNION

The people stand, as they are able.

OFFERTORY HYMN

Musical notation for the Offertory Hymn. The lyrics are: All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to thee, whose ad-vent doth thy peo-ple free; whom with the Fa - ther we a - dore and Ho - ly Spi - rit ev - er - more.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Musical notation for the Great Thanksgiving. The lyrics are: Priest: The Lord be with you. All: And also with you. P: Lift up your hearts. All: We lift them to the Lord. P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

The Eucharist, or Communion, is the act of offering, breaking bread, and sharing in Christ's life, death, and resurrection. It also reminds us that we are Christ's body in our world today.

As Episcopalians, the Eucharist is the principal act of worship, in which we always have a full proclamation of the heart of the Gospel. Celebrating Eucharist is something we do together, so we all take part in the prayers.



It is a right and 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:

SANCTUS

The Sanctus (holy, holy, holy) recalls the words of the prophet Isaiah, overwhelmed by the presence of God in the sanctuary, and these words were sung by the people as Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. The Sanctus reminds us that this is an offering of the whole creation, which joins in singing these praises.

Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord, God of hosts. Heav - en and earth are full, are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, 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 Jesus Christ, (v) the Word made flesh.

For in these last days you sent Jesus to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In Christ, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In Christ, 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 Savior Jesus Christ (v) 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 Jesus 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 God,

**We remember Christ's death,
We proclaim Christ's resurrection,
We await Christ's 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 in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, (v) through whom we are acceptable to you, 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 the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Gregory, and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your children; through Jesus Christ (v) our Savior, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, (v) in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and for ever.



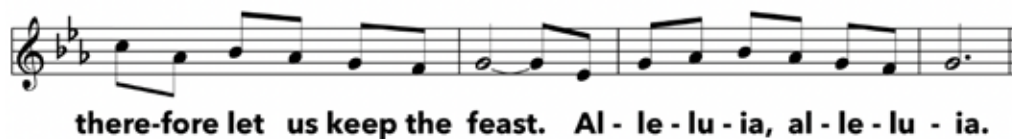
And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**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.**

THE FRACTION

The Presider breaks the consecrated Bread.



INVITATION

All are welcome at the Lord's table. Baptized Christians, regardless of denomination or age, are invited to receive Holy Communion. Gluten-free bread is available; please ask the clergy. Receiving the bread only is full communion in the body of Christ, so if you choose to not receive the wine, you may cross your arms over your chest as you pass the Eucharistic Minister, or take a cup of consecrated juice.

The Great Amen is the only word in our Book of Common Prayer that is in all capital letters. It emphasizes that we all join together in asking Jesus to be present in the bread and wine, in boldly affirming our desire to receive God. It is appropriate to sing this with enthusiasm!

The Lord's Prayer is the prayer that Jesus gave to his followers when they asked him to teach them to pray. It links our daily bread to the spiritual food we receive in the Eucharist.

The Fraction recalls Jesus breaking the bread at the Last Supper to share with the disciples, and reminds us that Jesus' body was broken on the cross for us to be shared with the world. Therefore we keep a moment of silence for prayers of awe and gratitude.



To receive communion, hold out your hands and you will be given the bread. Then take a cup of wine or juice from the Eucharistic Minister, move to the next tray, consume the bread and wine there, put the empty cup in the tray, and replace your mask before returning to your seat.

Anyone who has not been baptized, or for other reasons desires to receive a blessing instead of Communion is invited to come forward, and cross your arms over your chest to indicate your desire for a blessing. If you seek a deeper relationship with Christ through baptism, please speak with a priest after the service.

COMMUNION HYMN



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



The Prayer for Spiritual Communion articulates a hunger for unity with Jesus Christ when you cannot physically receive the Body and Blood of Christ. This prayer connects the one(s) praying with the reception of Holy Communion. Those worshipping online are invited to say this prayer as those onsite receive Communion.

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION (for those worshipping remotely)

In union, gracious God, with your faithful people at every altar of your Church where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, we offer to you praise and thanksgiving. We remember your death, O Christ; we proclaim your resurrection; we await your coming in glory. Since we cannot receive you today in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, we beseech you to come spiritually into our hearts. Cleanse and strengthen us with your grace, Lord Jesus, **(v)** and let us never be separated from you. May we live in you, and you in us, in this life and in the life to come. **Amen.**

The people stand, as they are able.

SENDING OF EUCHARISTIC VISITORS (when appropriate)

We send you out to share Communion this week.

May you carry the prayers of all of us as you take this sacrament of Christ's presence.

May those who receive it from you be strengthened and encouraged in that community we have together in our Lord Jesus Christ. **(v) Amen.**

Let us pray.

God of abundance, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation; you have united us with Christ and one another; and you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue for ever in the risen life of Christ our Savior. (v) Amen.

The people sit.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The people stand, as they are able.

BLESSING

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of God's blessing and set you free from all sin. **Amen.**

May Jesus, 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 Christ's 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.**

After Communion, we give thanks for being part of the communion of God's life and for being fed so that we may go out to feed and serve others in our world.

One of the roles of the priest is to declare the eternal truth of God's ever-present blessing to God's people.



EXIT HYMN

1 Hark! a thrill-ing voice is sound-ing: "Christ is nigh," it seems to say;
 2 Wak-ened by the sol- emn warn - ing, from earth's bond-age let us rise;
 4 so when next he comes with glo - ry, and the world is wrapped in fear,
 5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, and bless - ing to the Fa - ther and the Son,

1 "Cast a - way the works of dark-ness, O ye child-ren of the day."
 2 Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling, shines up - on the morn - ing skies.
 4 may he with his mer - cy shield us, and with words of love draw near.
 5 with the ev - er - last-ing Spi - rit while un - end - ing a - ges run.

The Deacon dismisses the people, and the people respond,
Thanks be to God!

Having heard the Gospel and having been fed at communion, the final act of our common worship is the Dismissal. It is not an afterthought, but an integral part of the service. Jesus' final action on earth was to send his followers into the world to make disciples, baptizing and teaching them to obey all he had commanded. And so we are sent out into the world to proclaim the Good News and be Christ's hands and feet on earth.



Christmas worship with StGs



Christmas Eve at 4pm

Intergenerational festive Eucharist with brass quintet, timpani, choir, and flowers. This service will be onsite and online via Zoom and Facebook Live.

Christmas Day at 9:30am

Christmas is on a Sunday this year! Come as you are for this celebration of Christ's birth with Eucharist – onsite and online via Zoom and Facebook Live.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

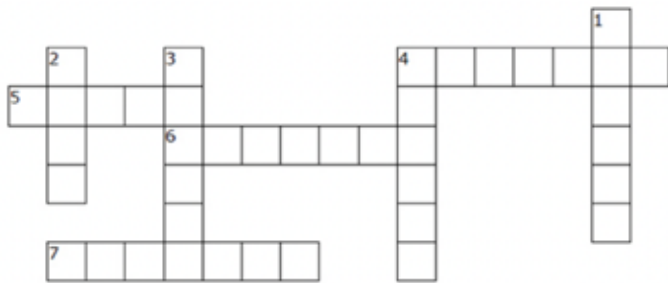
Christmas flowers and music! If you are interested in donating to the altar music/flower fund for Christmas, please fill out an envelope supplied at the church or if you prefer, contact Charlene at parish@stgregoryschurch.org.

Nicasa Christmas families: StGs once again has the opportunity to provide Christmas gifts for many families in need. To sponsor a family, please sign up at the link in the newsletter. If you are not able to do the shopping but would still like to sponsor, we are happy to do the shopping for you! The gift pick up is scheduled for the morning of Dec. 20, so the gifts will need to be in the Parker Room by the evening of Dec. 19. Once you've signed up, Janet Foltz will send information about your family to you. If you have any questions, please email Janet (jfoltz1004@hotmail.com). Thank you for helping our neighbors have a joyous Christmas!

Better Together formation continues: Father Adam Spencer from St. Elisabeth's continues to lead a four week series - " Spirituality in Advent " - on Wednesday evenings on Zoom this Advent season for our partner parishes. We meet Wednesdays on Zoom at 7pm through Dec 21st.

W	L	U	Z	M	H	V	J	O	J	Q	V	Q	S	U
I	Y	V	S	L	O	G	N	K	M	D	B	H	A	K
K	C	T	X	T	N	M	R	H	K	Y	T	E	X	X
C	I	X	J	T	E	Z	Y	J	T	A	E	S	L	E
P	N	N	Y	Y	A	S	L	P	P	T	R	Z	T	
R	B	M	G	J	W	I	L	D	G	S	U	E	S	Q
E	D	A	H	D	H	A	I	R	U	X	G	P	T	C
P	Z	O	P	Y	O	U	S	C	E	N	U	E	R	F
A	T	O	Q	T	W	M	O	H	I	N	J	N	A	F
R	Z	S	G	N	I	L	O	H	L	R	L	T	I	M
E	Z	J	N	P	O	Z	C	P	N	E	P	Y	G	P
E	S	P	O	A	E	A	E	H	M	N	N	Z	H	C
L	O	R	D	H	E	M	T	A	F	T	Q	X	T	Y
J	W	K	K	R	N	J	C	U	Y	C	T	Q	T	U
I	X	E	P	F	N	M	H	L	D	Z	D	E	N	I

LORD	PREPARE	KINGDOM	JOHN	HAIR
BAPTIZE	STRAIGHT	PATHS	PREACHING	WILD
REPENT	LOCUSTS	HONEY	CAMEL	BELT



ACROSS

- 4. One who speaks for God, or tells what will happen in the future
- 5. The sounds that are made when people speak or sing
- 6. To get ready for something that is going to happen
- 7. What John did to people in the Jordan River

DOWN

- 1. An area where there is little rain and not many plants
- 2. The man who preached that Jesus was coming
- 3. To be sorry for something bad you have done and make a change
- 4. To deliver a sermon

VOICE	PREPARE	DESERT	PROPHET
REPENT	JOHN	PREACH	BAPTIZE



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