

Grace Episcopal Church
The Holy Eucharist
The First Sunday in Advent
December 3, 2023

Processional Hymn *Lo! He comes with clouds descending*

H 58

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Reader: The first candle we light today, reminds us of the hope of those who waited for the day when the Messiah would come to be the light of the world and lead us out of darkness...toward our God.

All: Dear God make us strong as we wait for the day when your Son will be born and take darkness away.

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

People **And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen**

The Collect for Purity

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.**

The Kyrie Eleison

S90

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

The Collect of the Day

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lessons

The First Reading

Isaiah 64:1-9

A Reading from the Book of Isaiah.

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence--
as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil--
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.

You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.

But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.

We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.

We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord,
and do not remember iniquity forever.

Now consider, we are all your people.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

responsively by half verse

Let us pray together Psalm 18:1-7, 16-18 responsively by half verse:

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
stir up your strength and come to help us.

Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

O Lord God of hosts, *
**how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?**

You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.

And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.

Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

The Epistle

I Corinthians 1:3-9

A Reading from the First Letter to the Corinthians

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind-- just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you-- so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Sequence Hymn *Watchman, tell us of the night*

H 640

The Gospel

Mark 13:24-37

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Mark.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said, "In those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,

and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep

awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon

Rev. Donald Holland

The Nicene Creed

BCP p. 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 Form I

BCP p. 383

Deacon or other leader

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord, saying “Lord, have mercy.”
For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the Holy Church of God, and for the unity
of all peoples, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For our Bishop, and for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For our President, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority, let us pray to the
Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this city, for every city and community, and for those who live in them, let us pray to
the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those in need of prayers, especially the Vestry and the Search Committee, Bishop
Curry, Damon, Cheryl, Glenda, Joanne, Michelle, Kevin, Stephen, Tamara, Barb, Terri
Lou, Jeffery, Curtis, Lauri, Sage, Edith, Randy & Cindy, Wayne, and Rob, let us pray to the
Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who are unable to worship with us, especially Allen, Tom, Rachel, Rose, Jo,
Jacque, Arlene, Una, Dot, Shary, Jenny, Luke, Susan & Winky, and Frances, let us pray to
the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, especially Vickie, and for all the departed, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those celebrating birthdays this week, especially David, Cynthia, Benjamin, Pat, and Rob, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That we may end our lives in faith and hope, without suffering and without reproach, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

In the communion of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life, to Christ our God.

To thee, O Lord our God.

Silence.

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

The Celebrant Says

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Confession of Sin

Jesus, forgive my sins. Forgive the sins that I can remember, and also the sins I have forgotten. Forgive the wrong actions I have committed, and the right actions I have omitted. Forgive the times I have been weak in the face of temptation. And those when I have been stubborn in the face of correction. Forgive the times I have been proud of my own achievements, and those when I have failed to boast of your works. Forgive the harsh judgments I have made of others, and the leniency I have shown to myself. Forgive the lies I have told to others, and the truths I have

avoided. Forgive me the pain I have caused others, and the indulgence I have shown to myself. Jesus have pity on me, and make me whole. 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

All stand. The Celebrant says to the people

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

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

Announcements

Offertory

The Great Thanksgiving, Eucharistic Prayer B

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

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.**

It is right, and a 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:

The Sanctus

S 130

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

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.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or to lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

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 before he died for us, 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, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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 forever. AMEN.

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.
Then may be sung or said*

The Fraction *My flesh is food indeed*

S 169

**My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed, says the Lord. My Lord.
Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood dwell in me, and I in them.
My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed, says the Lord.**

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation

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.

The ministers receive the Sacrament in both kinds, and then immediately deliver it to the people.

The Bread and the Cup are given to the communicants with these words

The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven. [Amen.]

The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. [Amen.]

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

Celebrant and 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 Recessional Hymn *The King shall come*

H 73

The Bishop, when present, or the Priest, may bless the people.

Let us bless the Lord.

People

Thanks be to God.

December 2023 Servers

December 3 - LEM: Ken Taft, Rick Charlett Lector: Chris Jeffords

Intercessor: Gail Walker Altar Guild: Audrey Jernigan

Usher: Brian Blount, Gail Walker

Luncheon: Team 7: *Ann Combs, Nova Theriault, Debra Strickland, Cindy Russ, Elaine Sowell

December 10 – LEM: Audrey Jernigan, Brandy Holland Lector: Brian Blount

Intercessor: Cynthia Herrin Altar Guild: Jimmy Pinckney

Usher: Debra Strickland, James Israel

Refreshments: Team 1: *Alison & Tom Strait, Tiffany Henderson, Cheryl Jacobs, Paul Schwartz

December 17 - LEM: Jim Brown, Dayton Lang Lector: Larry Purdom

Intercessor: Brandy Holland Altar Guild: Rhonda Blount

Usher: Brandy Holland, Ken Taft

Refreshments: Team 2: *Audrey Jernigan, Mike Taylor, Don Brown, Anita Lynn, Janice Williams, Sara & Nancy Joyner

December 24 - LEM: James Israel, Jimmy Pinckney Lector: Pat Dell

Intercessor: Debra Strickland Altar Guild: TBD

Usher: Brian Blount, Debra Strickland

Refreshments: Team 3: *Brandy Holland, Rick Charlett, Jeris Tyre, Alex & Jessica Jones

Christmas Eve Service - LEM: Brandy Holland, Audrey Jernigan Lector: Tom Strait

Intercessor: Chris Jeffords Altar Guild: TBD

Usher: Ken Taft, James Israel

Refreshments: Vestry Providing

December 31 - LEM: Jim Brown, Ken Taft Lector: Gail Walker

Intercessor: Tom Strait Altar Guild: TBD

Usher: Gail Walker, Brandy Holland

Refreshments: Team 4: *Peggy Lang, Rachel Snider, Rhonda Blount, Gail Walker, Bill Todd, Greg Stratton

December Vestry Team – Nova Theriault, Jim Brown, Gail Walker

The Prayer List

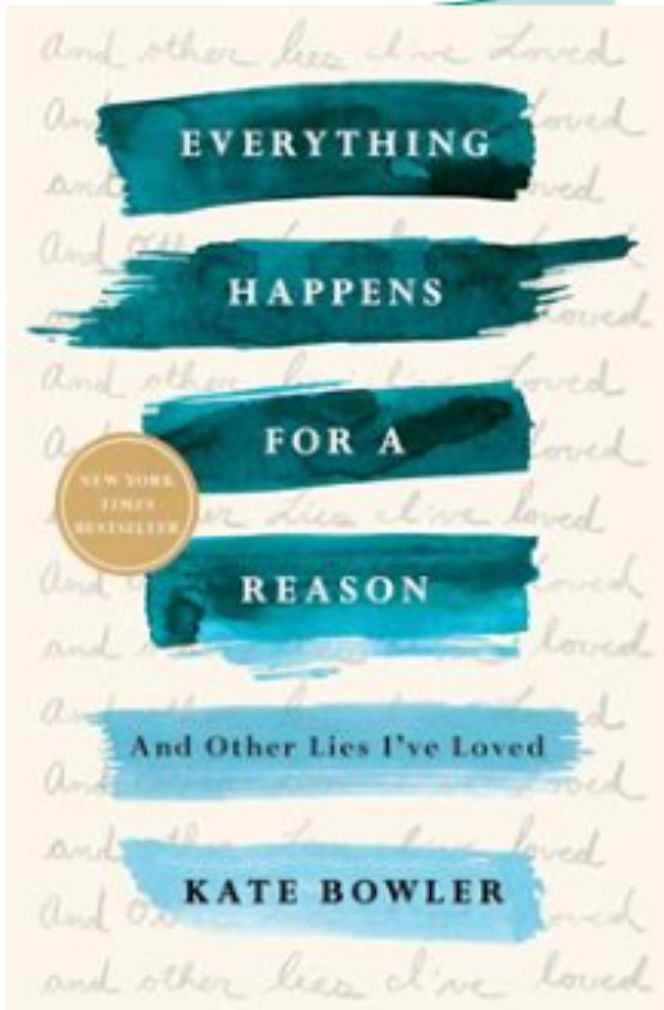
Anita Lynn of the Parish Prayer Team manages our prayer list. Please contact her at (912-281-6804 or gmallynn41@gmail.com) if you would like to add someone to the prayer list. Beginning November 1, names added to the list will rotate off the list after four weeks. Of course, names can be continued on the list if prayer is still needed, just let

Announcements: See Gail Walker to make a donation toward the Christmas meals for our Ruskin Families. Blessing Box collections weekly. Sacks for Saturday Tuesdays at 4:30 pm. Advent Study begins on Wednesday, December 6 at 6 pm. During Advent we will have a light meal followed by Eucharist and a study of *Everything Happens for a Reason: And other Lies I've Loved*. OATH Collection today. Annual Meeting December 10. December 16 – Grace Food Pantry Distribution. See Fr. Holland or Edie Teal for details on volunteering.

Christmas Eve Services

Make your plans to attend our Christmas Eve services. Christmas Eve falls on Sunday this year. We will have an Advent Eucharist service at 10 am. Then, at 8 pm that evening we will have our Christmas Eve service followed by a reception. We hope you and yours will plan to attend these most holy celebrations.

Advent Suppers & Book Study



At the age of 34, Duke Divinity School professor Kate Bowler learned she had stage IV colon cancer. An able guide through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, Kate is a faithful follower of Jesus who reminds us that none of us is spared coming to terms with our mortality. Stripped of certainty, Kate discovers that life is difficult, but beautiful in a way it never has been before. *Everything Happens for a Reason (and Other Lies I've Loved)* is not simply an insightful and funny memoir, but a exploration of theodicy, that is God's justice. Through Kate's story, we see how God does not fail us even as every pat answer falls flat. Rev. Donald Holland will lead us through our Advent study of this book on the following dates.

Week 1 (December 6): Preface & Chapters 1-3

Week 2 (December 13): Chapters 4-5

Week 3 (December 20): Chapters 6-7

Week 4 (December 27): Chapters 8-9 and the appendices

Copies are available in the Parish Hall.