



ADVENT III

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Raleigh, NC
December 12, 2021 – 10:00 a.m.

THE GATHERING

The people gather. First gong, enter into silence. Second gong, please stand.

Opening (Prepare Ye)

A single Cantor chants the opening Versicle 3X and the congregation responds as the Altar Party gathers near the Advent Wreath

Cantor Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord
People ***Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord***

Presider Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every evil.
(I Thessalonians 5:16-24)

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath—Theme: Love (The Joy of Home)

The appointed leaders approach the Advent Wreath and begin with the following:

Reader It's a reunion, every time we go home, every time we embrace those we love, no matter how long it has been. It feels like sunrise, like the clouds are parting and the rain has ended. It is joy, nothing less than pure joy to grab hold of those who are home for us, who make home for us. Whether we wake up to them every day, or travel many miles to see them again, it is joy to go home.

People **The prophet Zephaniah tells us to rejoice at the thought of going home. The prophet tells us to imagine being set free, being unburdened, being released to live, to fully live in the grace and wonder of life itself, surrounded by those who love us like no one else. And then to live like that was our truth even now, even here. It is joy to go home.**

Reader John the Baptist reminds us, however, that it takes choices to live in this joy. It doesn't just happen; we choose to make life a joy by how we love others, by how we serve and give and

care for others, by how we do the job we do and how we impact the world around us. We build joy as we build a home in this world and the next.

(Three candles are lit on the Advent wreath)

Reader We light these candles, the candle of hope, and of peace, and of joy, as a sign that we are on our way home, and we walk with a skip in our step because we can see the destination, and it is pure joy. It is time to go home.

(Source: adapted, Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy 2021, Derek Weber)

Acclamation

Presider Blessed is our God, now and forever, unto the ages of ages.

People **Amen! Glory to God! Glory to God!**

Gloria

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The Collect of the Day

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. **Amen.**

THE WORD OF GOD

Zephaniah 3:14-20

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The

king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches. **Thanks be to God.**

Canticle 9 (The First Song of Isaiah)

Surely, it is God who saves me;
I will trust in him and not be afraid.
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense,
and he will be my Savior.
Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing
from the springs of salvation.
And on that day you shall say,
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name;
Make his deeds known among the peoples;
see that they remember that his Name is exalted.
Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things,
and this is known in all the world.
Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy,
for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

**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.**

Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches. **Thanks be to God.**

+ The Holy Gospel Luke 3:7-18

The holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke. **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin 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 Abra-

ham. 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." And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages." As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

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

The Homily A marked period of silence follows the Homily.

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

Let our hearts and minds be stirred as we pray to God for that peace so much greater than we can imagine, saying: Quicken your Spirit within us; O Lord, hear our prayer.

For peace in the world: May the wars on every continent cease, may nations be at rest, may refugees and survivors be healed, losses grieved, and honorable deeds remembered. May grace abound in all lands, Quicken your Spirit within us; **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For peace in the church: May we intensify our efforts of peacemaking with the separated churches, that peace may prevail over conflict and we be reconciled in one family, exercising one baptism, one Eucharist, and one common ministry in its many forms. Quicken your Spirit within us; **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For this assembly: May we let go of our vested interests and inspired by your Spirit seek peace with one another. Help us give up the grievances we harbor within our families and communities and among our co-workers and friends. Help us build trust, the cornerstone of all reconciled relationships. Quicken your Spirit within us; **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For peace where we live, work and recreate, and for peace within ourselves: May the noises in and around us diminish so that we can hear the sounds of the trees, the birds, the winds and the rain. Give us space and time to hear ourselves, to feel our own feelings and express our own longings, knowing that the only one true longing is your longing for us. Quicken your Spirit within us; **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For young people: Let us provide space for them in our lives, and time to reassure them in their insecurities, encourage them in their hopes, and ever strengthen them in their gifts. Quicken your Spirit within us; **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the elderly and the infirm: We give thanks for the health and long life that many enjoy, and we pray for those who are overcome with suffering in body and spirit. Help us comfort one another and share with one another, knowing that whatever we ask for in prayer, those needs will be satisfied. Quicken your Spirit within us; **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For healing among all those who suffer including: **Rudolph McEwan, Ryoko Roberts, Beth Plumeri, Leah Underwood, Becky Toole, David Robbins, Sarah Robbins, Valerie Aguirre, Vickie LoMonte, Judy Wray, David Myher, Elayne Karickoff, Ruth Mufandaedza, Lee Witcher, Audrey Witcher, Deanna Hill, Sophia Vaughan Morning, Mary Mainwaring, Katie Critcher, Dave Bowman, Denise Davis, Carmen Reeve, James Barber, Celia Nail, Betty Johnson, William Nail, Ginny Barber, Janice Fowlkes, Harriet Banner, Susan Tobie, Hugh Stohler and Rpaol Smith.** Quicken your Spirit within us; **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those celebrating birthdays this week: **David Carter (16th); Ed Toole (19th)**. Quicken your Spirit within us; **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who die violent deaths rooted in racism, misogyny and homophobia and for those who mourn them. Lord, in your mercy, **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who died in the aftermath of the devastating tornadoes in Kentucky and other parts of the Midwest and for those still in peril. Lord, in your mercy, **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who have died from COVID-19 and for those who mourn them. Lord, in your mercy, **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all who have died in the peace of Christ. Lord, in your mercy, **O Lord, hear our prayer.**

Deacon For the forgiveness of our sins; for the times we have failed to love, for the moments when we didn't speak out against injustice and for our complicitness in oppressive and dehumanizing systems. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The People may kneel or bow.

God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.

The Presider offers the absolution

The Exchange of Peace

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

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Gathering of Tithes and Offerings

Song: O come, O come Emmanuel (sung a' Capella)

O Come, O come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.
[Refrain] 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. [Refrain]

O come, thou Dayspring from on high, and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadow put to flight. [Refrain]

O Come, O come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear. [Refrain]

The Great Thanksgiving

Presider: All things come from you, O God.

People: **And of your own have we given you.**

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 our thanks and praise.

We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready the creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing. You made us in your image, and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away; and yet, as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love. And so this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we sing (say):

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

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God. To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love. Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice. Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new creation, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made. In the fullness of time bring us, with [and] all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world. Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Presider breaks the consecrated bread also known as 'The Fraction'.

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. **Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia!**

Please remain masked during the distribution of Communion. You may wish to hold your communion bread/wafer until the end of distribution, so we may all commune together.

Prayer after Communion

The people stand.

Loving God, we give you thanks for restoring us in your image and nourishing us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood. Now send us forth a people, forgiven, healed, renewed; that we may proclaim your love to the world and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

THE SENDING

An Advent Blessing

The people stand. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)

May the God of peace sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this. And the blessing of God Almighty: the Father, the Son, and the only Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Deacon Alleluia, Alleluia. Let us bless the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia.**

The Rev. Tyrone Fowlkes, Presider
The Rev. Dr. Ruthann Savage-King, Preacher



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