



SAINT JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH ASHFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 22, 2024

Welcome to Saint John's!

Our mission at St. John's Church in Ashfield is to grow, through worship, in God's gospel of hospitality and wholeness, and to faithfully live that word in our fellowship, families, communities, and the world. May all who enter here be received as Christ.

An Acknowledgement

We worship and share God's mission on the unceded land of the Nipmuc, Pocumtuc, and Wabanaki peoples. We are mindful that our blessing came at the price of their sorrow and we pledge to grow in our awareness of racial injustice with God's help.

Invitation to Holy Communion

This is God's table. All are welcome to receive Holy Communion. To eat, present your hands to be given bread. To drink, take a sip as the cup is held to your lips. Dipping the bread into the wine is discouraged for reasons of public health. To receive a blessing, instead of bread, cross your arms on your chest.

Acknowledgements

- *The Book of Common Prayer, 1979*
- *Eucharistic Prayer B (Expansive Language)*
- *The Book of Occasional Services 2022 for blessing & EOW 1 for the greeting*
- Service Music reprinted with permission from RiteSong.com
- *The Holy Bible, The New Revised Standard Version*
- Advent Wreath Liturgy, The Rev. Matthew Kozlowski *adapted*

Bold text is said by the assembly

**Stand as you are able*

Prelude “Dialogue” Louis Clarambeau (1676-1749)

Duane Nyman, Organist

*Gathering Hymn *Hymnal 1982 #54*, Savior of the nations, come

Presider Blessed are you, holy and living One.

People **You come to your people and set them free.**

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

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Today we light the first, second, third, and fourth candles of the Advent wreath. The first candle is HOPE, the second candle is PEACE, the third candle is JOY, and the fourth candle is LOVE.

The candle is lit as cantor intones:

Verse 1: O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Second Reading

Hebrews 10:5-10

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews.

⁵Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; ⁶in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

⁷Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’ (in the scroll of the book it is written of me).” ⁸When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), ⁹then he added, “See, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

*Sequence *Hymnal* 1982 #437, Tell out my soul

Gospel

Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." [⁴⁶And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."]

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Christ.

Sermon

The Rev. Vicki Ix

Shared silence

*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

We pray for the wardens and vestry of this congregation.
Into our beauty and brokenness, **Come, Lord Jesus.**

We pray for a just and lasting peace for all who make their home in the Holy Land.
Into our beauty and brokenness, **Come, Lord Jesus.**

We pray hope for climate activists and for all who cherish the creation.
Into our beauty and brokenness, **Come, Lord Jesus.**

We pray for those who keep watch with the sick, the dying and the distressed.
Into our beauty and brokenness, **Come, Lord Jesus.**

We pray for all who suffer from mental illness and the disease of addiction.
Into our beauty and brokenness, **Come, Lord Jesus.**

We pray for the women who will be released this week from the Women's
Correctional Center in Chicopee.
Into our beauty and brokenness, **Come, Lord Jesus.**

We pray for all those we carry in our hearts today whom we name aloud. *Pause*
Into our beauty and brokenness, **Come, Lord Jesus.**

We pray for our beloved dead and all who seek your face.
Into our beauty and brokenness, **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Cycles of Prayer

I ask your prayers for those remembered in our cycles of prayer: In the Anglican cycle we pray for The Church of the Province of Uganda. In our Diocesan cycle we pray for St. Matthew's, Worcester; Safe Church Officer, The Rev. Tanya R. Wallace; Berkshire Interfaith Organizing (BIO); Church Pension Group (CPG). In our town's cycle we pray for our libraries, Historical Society, and Trails Committee. Among our members and friends, we pray for Kevin Blanchard; The Rev. Thad Bennett and George Connell; Beatrice Blain; Craig Borchardt; Ross Craft Branch, and Jacqueline; Dee Brochu; Lucinda Brown; Annie Cheatham and Ann Gibson. We pray for those who serve in the armed forces, including Sean M. Skalski. And among our ministries we pray for our Third Century Team.

Amen.

Presider concludes with a collect

Creator of the stars of night,
we entrust our deepest hopes to your mercy,
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins against God, our neighbor and all creation.

Silence may be kept.

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 our Savior 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 the grace of 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 of Christ be always with you.

And also with you.

Wardens' Welcome & God Moments

The Holy Communion

Offertory Anthem The St. John's Madrigal Singers—Lo, how a rose e're blooming
(*harm. Michael Praetorius*)
Julie Meservey, Director

The Great Thanksgiving
Eucharistic Prayer B *Expansive Language*

Presider God be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider 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, Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth.

Here a Proper Preface is sung or said on all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed.

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 S-125 (Proulx)

Then the Celebrant continues

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, 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.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it or 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.

On the night before he died for us, our Savior 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 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 Father,
Celebrant and People

**We remember Christ's death,
We proclaim Christ's resurrection,
We await Christ's coming in glory;**

The Celebrant continues

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Savior 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, 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 [_____and] all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your children; through Jesus Christ 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,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit
all honor and glory is yours,
Almighty God,
now and for ever.

Amen.

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

**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 S-164 (Shubert/Proulx)

Prayer for Spiritual Communion

Armed Services Prayer Book, 2008

We pray with the church online

In union, O Lord, with your faithful people at every altar of your Church, where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, I desire to offer to you praise and thanksgiving. I remember your death, Lord Christ; I proclaim your resurrection; I await your coming in glory.

The elements are offered to those online

CONGREGANT ONLINE: Since I cannot receive you today in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, I beseech you to come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and in the life to come.

ALL: Amen.

Presider The gifts of God for the people of God.

Communion Solo Kristen Wickline

*Postcommunion Prayer

Let us pray.

Eternal God,
you have graciously accepted us
as living members of 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 Savior.
Amen

Blessing

BOS, 2022

May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you
and scatter the darkness from before your path;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you, and remain with you always.
Amen.

Sending Forth 1982 Hymnal #56, O come, O come Emmanuel **verses 6, 7, 8**

Dismissal

Deacon Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude Ave Maria

Duane Nyman, Organist

Kay Spencer, Vocalist

Please stay for coffee and conversation!

Events

December 22: Greening of the Church 11:30am

December 23: Hilltown Churches Food Pantry

December 24: Carols begin at 4:30pm

December 24: Christmas Eve Service 5pm

December 29: Lessons and Carols 10am

December 29: Offertory dedicated to Vicar's Discretionary Fund in Memory of Russell Williams

January 5: Epiphany Sunday 10am

January 5: Festive coffee hour to celebrate the ministry of the Rev. Vicki Ix at St. John's Church following worship

January 11: Ring the Bells for Climate Change 11am

January 12: Vestry Meeting

Contact Us

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Lay Leaders & Clergy

Vicar: The Rev. Vicki Ix, 362-0742 communications@diocesewma.org

Co-Senior Wardens: Sue Craft, 628-0289 and Susan Todd, 628-3998

Junior Warden: Maddy Roberts

Treasurer: Raven Harris

Clerk: Lynnette Leidy Sievert

Vestry: Jane Wagener, Andrew Wickline

Licensed Preachers: Raven Harris, Andrew Wickline

Lay Eucharistic Visitors: Sue Craft, Andrew Wickline, Kristen Wickline, Jane Wagener

Licensed Worship Leaders: Andrew Wickline, Kristen Wickline, Sue Craft

Staff

Organist: Duane Nyman

Director, Madrigal Singers: Julie Meservey

Parish Administrator: Lis Henry email: stjohnsashfield@gmail.com

Financial Administrator: Amy Murray

Sexton: John Wickline

Ministries

Pastoral Care Team: Sue Craft

Liturgy Team: The Rev. Vicki Ix

Digital Ministry: Ted and Kara Toothaker, Andy Wickline, Jane Kaufman

Buildings & Grounds Team: Maddy Roberts

Green Team: Kristin Wickline

Prayer Shawl Ministry: Kristen Wickline

LOVE in a Backpack: Amanda Carter, Jenny Wildermuth

Bicentennial Celebrations: Addison Hall