

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 18/19, 2021



We seek to be instruments of God's peace, bearing witness to the love of God in Jesus Christ for all people.

ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Ministers: Every member of the Congregation



Welcome in the name of the living Christ to St. Francis Church! May you find renewed grace and peace as we worship together today. St. Francis is an Episcopal Church, part of the wider ministry of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts. If you are visiting with us today, please help us get to know you by introducing yourself at the door, and also by signing our guest book or filling out a pew card. *Please be sure to include an email address if you wish to be added to our mailing list.*

Please remember to take your cell phone or electronic device off silent mode at the end of worship.

You are invited to enter in reverence and awe of God's presence in this holy place. Before the liturgy begins we commend the keeping of silence as a time for prayer and reflection.

All baptized persons – regardless of denomination or age – are invited to receive the sacrament with us. All are welcome to the Table; even if you choose to not receive, you may wish to receive a blessing. Gluten-free bread is provided for those who request it (before the service begins); please be in touch with one of the clergy or ushers to make this request.

ABOUT OUR WORSHIP:

The liturgy that we use for worship is from the red Book of Common Prayer (**BCP**). **Bold** print is to be spoken by the people of God.

The hymnals used for our worship service are indicated by their name, and the specific hymn by its associated number. The blue hymnal book located in your pew book rack is the "1982 Hymnal," and the green hymnal book found in your pew seating area is the "Gather Hymnal."

COVID-19 Guidelines

Please follow instructions from the service ushers. The use of face mask coverings is now required for all people while indoors of the church building, whether you are vaccinated or unvaccinated. Face masks are not required while outdoors. Please maintain appropriate social distancing in the pews by observing the seating guidelines. Singing during the service is permitted with face coverings in place.

Please note: we are no longer requiring people to check-in and provide name and contact information for contact tracing purposes. In the event it becomes necessary to provide notification of a COVID-19 related matter, the church office will send email notification to the entire St. Francis community. If you are not on our email distribution list and you desire to be notified, please provide your contact information to the church office or one of the ushers. Thank you.

HOLY EUCHARIST – RITE II

GATHERING HYMN: 5:00 p.m.
10:00 a.m.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel, vv. 1, 2
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, vv. 7, 8

Gather 317
Hymnal 56

OPENING HYMN: 10:00 a.m.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord

Hymnal 437

THE WORD OF GOD

ACCLAMATION AND COLLECT FOR PURITY

BCP 355

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

And Blessed be God’s kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

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: 5:00 p.m. (*sung*)

Gather 233

8:00 a.m. (*spoken*) Lord, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.** Lord, have mercy.

10:00 a.m. (*sung*)

Hymnal S-96

COLLECT OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: *Micah 5:2-5a*

You, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Song of Mary Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) Please remain seated

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;
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*

When Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)." When 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), then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And 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.

Thanks be to God.

SEQUENCE HYMN: 10:00 a.m.

Praise we the Lord this day

Hymnal 267

GOSPEL READING: *Luke 1:39-55*

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

Glory to you Lord Christ.

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and

my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according 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. S. Jane Griesbach

THE NICENE CREED

BCP 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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE - FORM IV

BCP 388

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

...for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; Doug, our Bishop; for our own parish of St. Francis, our clergy, staff, wardens and vestry; for the mission of Renewal Works; for the ministry of unCommon Ground; ...for The Church of the Province of Central Africa; for the parish of St. Matthew's, Worcester; for the mission of Greater Worcester Habitat for Humanity;

[Silence]

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

...for Joe, our President and Charlie, our Governor;

...for the men and women of the Armed Forces and their families, especially J. Pigsley, Gregory Smith, Adam Heppe, Jason Haynes, Mark Williams, Matthew DiPinto, Jacob Pezzini, Tyler Jeck, Daniel Roy;

...for the people of Afghanistan, the refugees of Syria and for peace in Sudan, Yemen and the region of the Middle East; and for those facing famine and drought in Somalia and the Horn of Africa;

[Silence]

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory;

[Silence]

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us.

...for those in our Parish Cycle of Prayer: Theodore, Janet, Harry and Molly McDade; Donna McGrath; Greg, Nicole, Evan and Liam McGurin; Paul, Cynthia and Claire McIntyre;

[Silence]

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation.

...for those in need of healing, especially Rich, Sally, Xin-Zhu, Lorraine, Victor and Family, Jerry Couture, Donna Lasher, Mary, Will, Michael, Terri Lasher, Mary Ann;

[Silence]

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We commend to your mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and that they may share with Francis, Clare and all your saints in your eternal kingdom.

[Silence]

Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

(The Celebrant adds a concluding collect).

CONFESSION OF SIN

BCP 360

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

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 Celebrant:

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

BCP 360

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE HOLY COMMUNION

OFFERTORY HYMN: 5:00 p.m.
10:00 a.m.

*Holy is your name
Virgin-born, we bow before thee*

**Gather 147
Hymnal 258**

OFFERTORY PRESENTATION AND DOXOLOGY

8:00 a.m. *All things come of thee, O Lord. **And of Thine own have we given thee.***
10:00 a.m. Tune: Hymnal 380
*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING: Eucharistic Prayer A

BCP 361

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.

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

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 5:00 p.m. (sung)

Gather 235

8:00 a.m. (spoken)

10:00 a.m. (sung)

Hymnal S130

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.

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, 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:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. 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 for ever. **AMEN**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BCP 364

Traditional

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.

Contemporary

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.

FRACTION ANTHEM

5:00 p.m.

AGNUS DEI

Gather 240

8:00 a.m. Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

10:00 a.m.

AGNUS DEI

S-164

MINISTRATION OF COMMUNION

- Everyone is invited to come forward for the ministration of Communion. Please leave masks in place and come forward to receive the Communion wafer by extending your hands to accept the wafer from the clergy. Please take the wafer and consume it by momentarily removing your mask from your mouth and then replace your mask to its original position.
- For those wishing to come forward to receive a blessing only, please cross your arms in front of your chest.
- For those who do not wish to receive Communion at this time, you may express your desire of communion with God by saying the Prayer of Spiritual Communion.

Prayer of Spiritual Communion (*optional – for those not receiving the Holy Communion wafer.*)

Gracious Lord Jesus, we believe that you are truly present in the sacred mystery of the Blessed Sacrament of Holy Communion. We love and devote ourselves to you and your reconciling mission of love, and desire your presence in our souls. Since we cannot receive the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, come spiritually into our hearts. Cleanse and strengthen us with your grace, Lord Christ, 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.

COMMUNION HYMN: 5:00 p.m.

Like a shepherd

Gather 325

10:00 a.m.

The angel Gabriel from heaven came

Hymnal 265

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

BCP 365

Let us pray.

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.

ADVENT BLESSING

RECESSIONAL HYMN: 5:00 p.m.

Night of silence

Gather 342

10:00 a.m.

The King shall come when morning dawns

Hymnal 73

THE DISMISSAL

BCP 366

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

St. Francis Episcopal Church



Bearing Witness
to
Christ's Love

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