

# The First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2023



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. The holy season of Advent is a time of watchfulness and a season of preparation. We are eager to celebrate the feast of the Incarnation – Christmas. But as with all “pregnancies” there is first a time for waiting.

*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; please let one of the clergy or ushers know of your 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.”

**THE ADVENT WREATH:** The Advent wreath, as we know it today, was first used in 16th century Germany. The Advent wreath may have some local differences and meanings, but in general, the wreath has four candles around the wreath, and one candle in the center. The candles can be seen with varying colors: sometimes purple (meaning a season of penitence, much like Lent), or they may be a deep blue (meaning a season of hope and waiting). The candle representing the Third Sunday of Advent is often pink, to represent “Joy” and is called “Gaudete Sunday” (from the Latin, “Gaudete in Domino semper” meaning, “Rejoice in the Lord always”). The candle in the center is nearly always white, to represent the purity of Christ.

## HOLY EUCHARIST – RITE II

**GATHERING HYMN:** 10:00 a.m.     *O Come, O Come Emmanuel verses 1-2*

**Hymnal 56**

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN:** 10:00 a.m.     *Hail to the Lord's Anointed*

**Hymnal 616**

## 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:** 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.

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.**

### **FIRST READING: Isaiah 64:1-9**

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**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

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.**

**SEQUENCE HYMN:** 10:00 a.m.

*Lo! he comes, with clouds descending*

**Hymnal 57**

**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****SERMON:**

The Rev. Patrick Perkins

**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 ministry of unCommon Ground; for the mission of Renewal Works  
...for The Church of North India; for the parish of St. Mark'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 Maura, 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, Jacob Pezzini, Tyler Jeck, Daniel Roy, David Lane, Riley Smith;

...for peace throughout the world; for the victims of war and terrorism, for the people of Ukraine and Afghanistan, 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: Dolores Wellington; Joel Wesson and Lisa Nicholas; Kim, Chris and Maggie Whamond; David and Susan Williams;

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: Rich, Eric Warner, Kathleen Lloyd Jones, Isabel, Jack, Jonathan Seale, Al, Ann Murphy, Bill;

...those suffering from homelessness and all types of addiction and mental illness; the residents and staff of Holden Nursing Home; and those who mourn; and those we name at this time, either silently or aloud;

Silence

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

We commend to your mercy all who have died, especially Joe Ciesla, 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.**

*Celebrant adds a final 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.**

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: 10:00 a.m.

*Watchman, tell us of the night*

Hymnal 640

### 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 every where 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**

**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.**

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

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

BCP 364

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.

### FRACTION ANTHEM:

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

Hymnal S-164

***Jesus, Lamb of God: have mercy on us. Jesus, bearer of our sins: have mercy on us.***

***Jesus, redeemer, redeemer of the world, give us your peace, give us your peace.***

COMMUNION HYMN: 10:00 a.m. *"Thy kingdom come!" on bended knee*

Hymnal 615

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

BCP 366

Let us pray.

**Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

### ADVENT BLESSING

**RECESSIONAL HYMN:** 10:00 a.m.

*Rejoice! rejoice, believers*

**Hymnal 68**

**POSTLUDE:**

*Christ is made the sure foundation  
Angels from the realms of glory*

**THE DISMISSAL**

Go in peace and walk in the way of Love.

**Thanks be to God.**

**SERVERS THIS WEEKEND:**

Altar Guild: Bev Giarusso, Lucy Nowak, Kim Whamond

Nursing Home: Karen Kappes

8:00 a.m.

Reader/LEM: Rich Farrell

10:00 a.m.

Usher: Craig Stanovich

Reader/LEM: Tina Chen

Coffee Hour: Lisa Nicholas and Joel Wesson

Musical Notes: We are featuring a couple of hymns today to commemorate the first service held on the current grounds of St. Francis Church, on the First Sunday of Advent, November 29, 1953. Previous gatherings of the St. Francis community were held at the Holden Town Hall or in other places, but 70 years ago, Advent worship started at the Gould House, 70 Highland Street. The hymns sung at that service and again today include: our Communion hymn H-615 (Hymnal 1940 #391), and organ postlude based on “Christ is made the sure foundation” (tune Regent Square- “Angels from the realms of glory”).

# St. Francis Episcopal Church



Bearing Witness  
to  
Christ's Love

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