

Advent III



**December 15, 2024
10 am**

**Church of the Holy Nativity
4238 Pimlico Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21215
www.holynativitybaltimore.org**

A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE CHURCH

**Celebrant: The Reverend Karen Mercer
Musician: Dr. Lior Leigh**

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Today we light the first, second, and third candles of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE, the second candle is PEACE, and the third candle is JOY.

The candles are lit.

You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. *Isaiah 55:12*

Let us pray. Gracious God, you came to us in human flesh and you abide with us in the Holy Spirit. Fill us with your joy, and help us shine as a light to the world. Through Jesus Christ, who makes our joy complete. **Amen.**

Compiled and written by the Rev. Matthew Kozlowski

OPENING HYMN

H76 – *On Jordan's Banks*

1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings.

2 Then cleansed be every breast from sin;
make straight the way for God within,
and let each heart prepare a home
where such a mighty guest may come.

3 For thou art our salvation, Lord,
our refuge, and our great reward;
without thy grace we waste away
like flowers that wither and decay.

4 To heal the sick stretch out thine hand,
and bid the fallen sinner stand;
shine forth, and let thy light restore
earth's own true loveliness once more.

5 All praise, eternal Son, to thee,
whose advent doth thy people free;
whom with the Father we adore
and Holy Spirit evermore.

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry, #76 from *The Hymnal 1982* — Words: Charles Coffin (1676-1749); tr. Charles Winfred Douglas (1867-1944), after John Chandler (1806-1876); alt. Music: *Winchester New*, melody from *Musicalishes Hand-Buch*, 1690; harm. William Henry Monk (1823-1889), alt.

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

And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

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.

KYRIE

S96

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Lord have mercy, have mercy.

THE COLLECT

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

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.**

OLD TESTAMENT

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.

Listen for The Word of The Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE RESPONSE

Canticle 9

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.

THE EPISTLE

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.

Listen for The Word of The Lord.

Thanks be to God

SEQUENCE HYMN

H74 – *Blest Be the King Whose Coming* (v. 1-2)

1 Blest be the King whose coming
is in the name of God!
For him let doors be opened,
no hearts against him barred!
Not robed in royal splendor,
in power and pomp, comes he;
but clad as are the poorest,
such his humility

2 Blest be the King whose coming
is in the name of God!
By those who truly listen
his voice is truly heard;
pity the proud and haughty,
who have not learned to heed
the Christ who is the Promise,
who has atonement made.

THE 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 Abraham. 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.

SEQUENCE HYMN

3 Blest be the King whose coming
is in the name of God!
He only to the humble
reveals the face of God.
All power is his, all glory!
All things are in his hand,
all ages and all peoples,
till time itself shall end!

H74 – *Blest be the King whose coming* (v. 3 & 4)

4 Blest be the King whose coming
is in the name of God!
He offers to the burdened
the rest and grace they need.
Gentle is he and humble!
And light his yoke shall be,
for he would have us bear it
so he can make us free!

Blest be the King whose coming, #74 from *The Hymnal 1982* — Words: Federico J. Pagura (b. 1923); tr. Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000), alt. Copyright © 1974, by Hope Publishing company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All Rights Reserved. Used by permission. Harmonization Copyright © 1984, Ronald Arnatt. Music: *Valet will ich dir geben*, melody Melchior Teschner (1584-1635) alt.; harm. and desc. Ronald Arnatt (b. 1930).

SERMON

The Rev. Karen Mercer

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 worshipped 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

Intercessor: 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.

Intercessor: For peace in the world: May the wars on every continent cease, may nations be at rest, may refugees and survivors find a new home and the spirit to begin again. May wounds be healed, losses grieved, and honorable deeds remembered. May grace abound in all lands, and the lion and the lamb lie content. Quicken your Spirit within us;
O Lord, hear our prayer.

Intercessor: 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.

Intercessor: 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 coworkers and friends. Help us build trust, the cornerstone of all reconciled relationships. Quicken your Spirit within us;

O Lord, hear our prayer.

Intercessor: 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.

Intercessor: For our young people: Let us provide space for them in our midst, 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.

Intercessor: 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. We especially pray for those on our parish prayer list: Eileen, Gloria, Mildred, Karen, Tammy, Emanuel, Karen R., Dorris, Gouri, Katrina, Elaine, Justina, Eva, Rebecca, Lisa, Faye, Fr. Bill, Sharon, Vestina, Ruth, James, Diamond, Jamie, King, Katrina, Angel, Hope, Arlene, Norman, Dorian, Noleen, Leonard, Daniel, Nicole and Michael. 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.

Intercessor: You may add your own intercessions at this time.

A period of silence follows after which the Celebrant concludes with the following prayers

Celebrant: O Lord, fill our minds and hearts with everything that is good and loving and worthy of thanksgiving and praise, everything that comes to us under the sign of your peace and in the name of Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE CONFESSION OF SIN

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.

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

The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

WELCOME

Senior Warden

THE HOLY COMMUNION

What follows is the Holy Communion, the sacred meal of the Christian faith. The Episcopal Church, as do all other denominations rooted in the historic Christian faith, affirms that the sacrament of Baptism is the ancient and normative entry point for receiving the sacrament of Eucharist, yet no one who comes forward to receive the bread and wine at communion is ever turned away from God's table. Wherever you are in your spiritual journey, the Episcopal Church welcomes you, and we invite you to explore with us what baptism may mean for you. Want to know more? Please see Rev. Mercer following the service.

OFFERTORY HYMN

1 Precious Lord, take my hand,
Lead me on, let me stand,
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
Through the storm, through the night,
Lead me on to the light,
Take my hand, precious Lord,
Lead me on.

LEVAS 106 – *Precious Lord, Take My Hand*

2 When my way grows drear,
precious Lord, linger near,
When my life is almost gone;
Hear my cry, hear my call,
Hold my hand, lest I fall,
Take my hand, precious Lord,
Lead me on.

3 When the darkness appears
and the night draws near,
And the day is past and gone;

At the river I stand,
Guide my feet, hold my hand,
Take my hand, precious Lord,
Lead me on.

Take My Hand, Precious Lord, #106 from *Lift Every Voice and Sing II* — Words: Thomas A. Dorsey (1899-1993). Music: Thomas A. Dorsey; arrs. Horace Clarence Boyer (b. 1935). Words and Music: Copyright © 1940 Unichappell Music, Inc. Copyright Renewed. International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved.

DOXOLOGY

H 380

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

God 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.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth.

+ *The Celebrant adds a Proper Preface, then continues,*

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

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 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 [sing],

LORD'S PRAYER

LEVAS 264

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

FRACTION ANTHEM

S164

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy upon us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy upon us.

Jesus redeemer, redeemer of the world,

Give us your peace, give us your peace.

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

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.

COMMUNION HYMN

AAH190 – *While We are Waiting, Come*

1 While we are waiting, come;

While we are waiting come.

With pow'r and glory come

*Jesus our Lord, Emmanuel,
While we are waiting come.*

2 With pow'r and glory, come;
With pow'r and glory, come.

Refrain

3 Come savior, quickly come;
Come savior, quickly come.

Refrain

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

BCP 365

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.

CLOSING HYMN

LEVAS 60 – *How Great Thou Art*

1 O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds thy hands have made,
I see the stars I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed.

*Then sings my soul, my Savior, God, to Thee;
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!*

2 When through the woods and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees,
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze.

Refrain

3 And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
Send him to die, I scarce can take it in,

That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin.

Refrain

4 When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration,
And there proclaim, my God how great thou art.

Refrain

How Great Thou Art, #60 from *Lift Every Voice and Sing II* — Words: Stuart K. Hine (1899-1989). Music: Traditional Swedish folk tune/adapt. Stuart K. Hine. Copyright © 1949 and 1953 The Stuart Hine Trust. All rights in the U.S.A. except print rights administered by EMI CMG. U.S.A. print rights administered by Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

THE DISMISSAL

The Rev. Karen Mercer

As we go forth into the world, refreshed and renewed, we reaffirm our commitment to our mission as a congregation:

We are committed to sharing God's love with all through our worship and ministries.

Let us go forth to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.

POSTLUDE

Our Prayer List

Your prayers are requested for members and friends of The Church of the Holy Nativity: Eileen, Gloria, Mildred, Karen, Tammy, Emanuel, Karen R., Dorris, Gouri, Katrina, Elaine, Justina, Eva, Rebecca, Lisa, Faye, Fr. Bill, Sharon, Vestina, Ruth, James, Diamond, Jamie, King, Katrina, Angel, Hope, Arlene, Norman, Dorian, Noleen, Leonard, Daniel, Nicole and Michael..

We continue to ask for prayers for all those impacted by the coronavirus, those impacted by war and gun violence, those in our midst who are struggling with anxiety depression and addiction, those who are unemployed or underemployed, and the unhoused.

Announcements

Prayer Service – Wednesdays – 12 Noon

December 20	Blue Christmas Service	3 pm
December 22	Advent 4	
December 24	Christmas Eve Luncheon	1 pm
	Christmas Eve Service	2:30 pm
December 29	The Feast of the First Sunday after Christmas Advisory Board Meeting	10 am

ZOOM LINK FOR BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study: Isaiah, on Wednesdays beginning 10/23@ 7:30 pm until 12/18

Meeting ID: 869 7275 3486

Passcode: 145505

Notes

Today is: _____ Sermon Title: _____

Key Verses:

Worship Songs:

Prayers:
