



## The Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023

WELCOME

to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

a member of the Central Michigan Episcopal Covenant

### St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

Big Rapids, MI

Seeking every day to love God  
with our whole heart, mind, and soul, and  
to love our neighbors as ourselves.

### St. Mary's Episcopal Church

Cadillac, MI

We strive to live out the Great  
Commandment: To love the Lord with all  
our heart, soul, and mind and to love our  
neighbors as ourselves.

If you have a faith or are seeking one, you are always welcome here.

If you are visiting or looking for a spiritual home,  
we'd love to get to know you.

## MORNING PRAYER: ENRICHING OUR WORSHIP

### Opening Hymn

Hymnal #72

### Opening Sentence

Officiant Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness; let the earth open, that salvation may spring up, and let it cause righteousness to sprout up also. *Isaiah 45:8*

### Lighting the Advent Wreath

*Illustrated Ministry*

Leader In our most desperate times, by day or by night, the hope of Christ may be found. We watch and we wait to witness the hope of heaven making a place here on earth.

We light the candle of hope, because hope has come to us.

*Light the first candle.*

Leader When we are overwhelmed with conflict without or within, the peace of Christ may be found. We welcome the peace of Christ, present among us and available to all.

We light the candle of peace, because peace has come to us.

*Light the second candle.*

Leader Whether we find ourselves in the dark, cozy realm of nighttime or the blazing brightness of day, God's good message of joy has come to us to cheer our hearts. Today we light the candle of joy, celebrating the good news of a baby to be born in Bethlehem.

*Light the third candle.*

**All: Welcome, joy of Christ! Even in times of grief and sorrow, you never forsake us or leave us alone. Fill our hearts with joy today.**

## Confession and Absolution

Officiant      Let us confess our sins to God.      *All kneel as able. Silence may be kept.*

**All      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.**

Officiant      Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. Amen.

## The Invitatory and Psalter

*All stand as able.*

Officiant      O God, let our mouth proclaim your praise.

**People      And your glory all the day long.**

**All      Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.**

## Invitatory Psalm: Psalm 67:1-5

**All      Our God and Savior now draws near: O come let us worship.**

**O God, be merciful to us and bless us, \*  
show us the light of your countenance and come to us.**

**Let your ways be known upon earth, \*  
your saving health among all nations.**

**Let the peoples praise you, O God; \*  
let all the peoples praise you.**

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, \*  
for you judge the peoples with equity  
and guide all the nations upon earth.  
Let the peoples praise you, O God; \*  
let all the peoples praise you.

**The Psalm: 126**

**Bulletin Insert**

*After the Psalm:*

**All Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God: as it was in the  
beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.**

**The Lessons**

**Bulletin Insert**

**First Reading**

**Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11**

After the reading:   Reader       Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.  
                                  People       Thanks be to God.

**Canticle C: The Song of Hannah, 1 Samuel 2:1-8**

*Said in unison*

**All           My heart exults in you, O God; \*  
                  my triumph song is lifted in you.  
                  My mouth derides my enemies, \*  
                  for I rejoice in your salvation.  
                  There is none holy like you, \*  
                  nor any rock to be compared to you, our God.  
                  Do not heap up prideful words or speak in arrogance; \*  
                  Only God is knowing and weighs all actions.  
                  The bows of the mighty are broken, \*  
                  but the weak are clothed in strength.**

Those once full now labor for bread, \*  
those who hungered now are well fed.  
The childless woman has borne sevenfold, \*  
while the mother of many is forlorn.  
God destroys and brings to life, casts down and raises up; \*  
gives wealth or takes it away, humbles and dignifies.  
God raises the poor from the dust; \*  
and lifts the needy from the ash heap  
To make them sit with the rulers \*  
and inherit a place of honor.  
For the pillars of the earth are God's \*  
on which the whole earth is founded.

**Second Reading**

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-24**

After the reading:    Reader            Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.  
                                  People            Thanks be to God.

**Canticle R: A Song of God's Love, 1 John 4:7-11**

*Said in unison*

All            Beloved, let us love one another, \*  
                  for love is of God.  
                  Whoever does not love does not know God, \*  
                  for God is Love.  
                  In this the love of God was revealed among us, \*  
                  that God sent his only Son into the world,  
                  so that we might live through Jesus Christ.  
                  In this is love, not that we loved God but that God loved us \*  
                  and sent his Son that sins might be forgiven.  
                  Beloved, since God loved us so much, \*

**we ought also to love one another.  
For if we love one another, God abides in us, \*  
and God's love will be perfected in us.**

**Third Reading**

**John 1:6-8, 19-28**

After the reading:   Reader           Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.  
                          **People           Thanks be to God.**

**Reflection**   *The reflection may be a time of silence, a homily, or reading of a text.*

**The Apostles' Creed**

*Said by all, standing as able.*

**All           I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was  
conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered  
under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he  
descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended  
into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will  
come again to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion  
of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the  
life everlasting. Amen.**

**The Prayers**

*The people stand or kneel as able.*

Officiant   Hear our cry, O God.  
**People       And listen to our prayer.**  
Officiant   Let us pray.

**The Lord's Prayer**      *Said in unison*

**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.**

**Suffrages A**

**Officiant**      Help us, O God our Savior;

**People**      **Deliver us and forgive us our sins.**

**Officiant**      Look upon your congregation;

**People**      **Give to your people the blessing of peace.**

**Officiant**      Declare your glory among the nations;

**People**      **And your wonders among all peoples.**

**Officiant**      Do not let the oppressed be shamed and turned away;

**People**      **Never forget the lives of your poor.**

**Officiant**      Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you;

**People**      **And your favor to those who are true of heart.**

**Officiant**      Satisfy us by your loving-kindness in the morning;

**People**      **So shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life.**

**The Collect of the Day**

**Bulletin Insert**

**Hymn at the Prayers**

**Hymnal #67**

## The Prayers of the People

## *Praying the Scriptures*

Intercessor Dear friends, hold fast to what is good. And let us praise our God, saying, “We rejoice in you, O Lord; **we exult in you.**”

We rejoice in you, O God: you have clothed your people with the garments of salvation; you have covered us with robes of righteousness. You have done great things for us.

We pray for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; Radha, our Rector; our Central Michigan Episcopal Covenant; Transfiguration, Indian River; St. Paul’s, Flint - Tom, Priest in Charge, Trinity Church, Grand Ledge – Gail, Rector, Church of the Good Shepherd, Allegan – Corwin, Priest Associate. We pray for all those in our diocese discerning calls to ministry, both lay and ordained. In particular, we pray for those in our dioceses preparing for the Sacred Order of Priests, including Barrett, Alex, Matt, and Anne Marie, Abraham, John, Stephanie, Thon, Jessica, Julianne, Rachel, Cathy, Kathryn, Kris, Johnathan, Theresa. We pray also for those in our dioceses preparing for the Sacred Order of Deacons, including: Mary, Deb, Laura, Jennifer, Christi, Paige. We remember with gratitude the retired clergy of the diocese. *Silence*

We rejoice in you, O Lord;

**People We exult in you.**

Intercessor We rejoice in you, O God: you are a lover of justice. My your kingdom come and your will be done on earth. Replace your children’s tears with laughter. *Silence*

We rejoice in you, O Lord;

**People We exult in you.**



Intercessor We rejoice in you, O God: you cause the seeds to grow and the earth to bring forth its shoots. May the fields and streams, mountains and oceans, glorify you. *Silence*

We rejoice in you, O Lord;

**People We exult in you.**

Intercessor We rejoice in you, O God: you are the repairer of cities. Build up ruined places, raise up whatever is devastated. Heal our city. *Silence*

We rejoice in you, O Lord;

**People We exult in you.**

Intercessor We pray for those in positions of authority in our country and in the world, especially Joe, our president; Gretchen our govenor; Fred, our mayor. *Silence*

We rejoice in you, O Lord;

**People We exult in you.**

Intercessor We rejoice in you, O God: you speak good news to the oppressed, the brokenhearted, the captive, and those who mourn. May those who sow with tears, reap with songs of joy. We pray for those in the St.

Andrew's circle of prayer: Nan, Rodger & Judy, Elizabeth, Robert, Rob, Jessica, Krystal, Kevin, Kathy, Sharyn, Howie; For those in the St.

Mary's circle of prayer: Sharon & Family, Erin, Dorothea, Lonnie & Heather, Mike & Connie, Virginia, Renee, Larry & Therese, Janet,

Lawson, Josh & Lindsey, Nancy & Pat, Sally, Madi, Larry, Ron & Barb, Shanna, Charlene, DeeDee, Anita & Jim; For our family and friends in

the armed forces and who are first responders: Richard, Corey, Matt, Teylor, Tony, Kim, Drew, Jon, Sabastian, Noah, Eli, Jess; And for all

those we name at this time. *Silence*

We rejoice in you, O Lord;

**People**      **We exult in you.**

Intercessor    We rejoice in you, O God: through your Son, Jesus the Christ, you have made an everlasting covenant with us. Bless the dying and the dead forever. *Silence*

We rejoice in you, O Lord;

**People**      **We exult in you.**

Celebrant      O Lord our God, accept the fervent prayers of your people; in the multitude of your mercies, look with compassion upon us and all who turn to you for help; for you are gracious, O lover of souls, and to you we give glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

**The General Thanksgiving**      *Said in unison*

**BCP p. 101**

**Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made. We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.**

## The Celebration of Special Days and Announcements

For a Birthday

BCP, 830, #50

For an Anniversary

BCP, 431, first prayer

Travelers

BCP 831, #53

## Closing Hymn

**Hymnal #73 v1-3**

## Dismissal and Concluding Sentence

Officiant Let us bless the Lord.

**People Thanks be to God.**

Officiant Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to God from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*Ephesians 3:20,21*

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