



The Third Sunday of Advent

December 12, 2021

WELCOME

to St. Mary'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 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

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel
read by one voice*

O come, thou Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Dayspring from on high,
and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadow put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to thee, O Israel.

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.

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

**Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands; *
 serve the Lord with gladness
 and come before his presence with a song.
Know this: The Lord himself is God; *
 he himself has made us, and we are his;
 we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving;
go into his courts with praise; *
 give thanks to him and call upon his Name.
For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; *
 and his faithfulness endures from age to age.**

The Psalm

Canticle 9 – Isaiah 12:2-6

**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 Lessons

All sit as able.

First Reading

Zephaniah 3:14-20

Reader A reading from the book of Zephaniah.

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.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People Thanks be to God.

First Canticle

A Song of Christ's Goodness

Jesus, as a mother you gather your people to you;
you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.
Often you weep over our sins and our pride,
tenderly you draw us from hatred and judgment.
You comfort us in sorrow and bind up our wounds,
in sickness you nurse us and with pure milk you feed us.
Jesus, by your dying, we are born to new life;
by your anguish and labor we come forth in joy.
Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness;
through your gentleness, we find comfort in fear.
Your warmth gives life to the dead,
your touch makes sinners righteous.
Lord Jesus, in your mercy, heal us;
in your love and tenderness, remake us.
In your compassion, bring grace and forgiveness,
for the beauty of heaven, may your love prepare us.

Second Reading

Philippians 4:4-7

Reader A Reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.
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.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People Thanks be to God.

Though in the form of God,
Christ Jesus did not cling to equality with God,
But emptied himself, taking the form of a servant,
and was born in human likeness.
Being found in human form, he humbled himself
and became obedient to death, even death on a cross.
Therefore, God has highly exalted him
and given him the name above every name,
That at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth, And every tongue
confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Third Reading

Luke 3:7-18

Reader A reading from the Gospel of Luke.
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.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People Thanks be to God.

Third Canticle

The Song of Hannah

**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.

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

The Apostles' Creed *Said by all, standing as able.*

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.

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

Officiant 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.**

The Prayers of the People

Intercessor Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.
 Surely, it is God who saves us; therefore, we
 joyfully pray to the Lord, "God our salvation:
 thank you."

Though hindered by our sins and in need of your
bountiful grace and mercy, you never leave us.
You are ever in our midst. Renew your Church in
love.

We pray for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; Prince,
our Bishop Provisional-elect, the Standing
Committees of Eastern and Western Michigan;
Anne, our Canon Missioner; Radha, our Rector;
our Central Michigan Episcopal Covenant;

St. John's, Sand Point – Doug, Senior Warden
St. Paul the Apostle, Greenville – Helen, Senior
Warden.

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 Alicia, Joe,
Natalie, Alex, Derek, Catherine, Rebecca, Matt,
Dell, Joanna, Kurt, and Anne Marie. We pray also
for those in our dioceses preparing for the Sacred
Order of Deacons, including: Joy, Trish, Mark, Jim,
Michelle, and Linda. We remember with gratitude
the retired clergy of the diocese. *Silence*

God our salvation;

People **Thank you.**

Intercessor Make your deeds known among the people, O
God. Save the lame; gather the outcast. May the
exiles know home and all people know your peace.
We pray for Joe, our president; Gretchen our
governor; Fred, our mayor. *Silence*

God our salvation;

People **Thank you.**

Intercessor May your springs of salvation renew the earth.
Heal our planet and restore in us a sense of
responsibility and gratitude. *Silence*

God our salvation;

People **Thank you.**

Intercessor Merciful God, in this month of great excess and consumerism, call the financial and business communities to act justly and generously. Grant that those without coats be clothed and those without food be fed. *Silence*

God our salvation;

People Thank you.

Intercessor O God, you have done great things. With thankful hearts we pray to you for those burdened by shame, grief, or weakness. Be for them a stronghold and a sure defense.

We pray for those in the St. Mary's circle of prayer: Keith, Mike, George, Barb, Jim, Barbaranne, Lori, Deliah, Renee, Linda, Val, Lee, Leah, Ben & Shea;

For those in the St. Andrew's circle of prayer: Richard, Eileen, Ryan, Jim, Wahl & Rees Family, Beth, Bob & Beth, Pauline, Torry, Tom & Family, Sharon, Ann, Carley;

For our family and friends in the armed forces and who are first responders: Richard, Corey, Matt, Teylor, Tony, Kim, Drew, Eli, Jon, Richard, Tony; And for all those we name at this time. *Silence*

God our salvation;

People Thank you.

Intercessor God our salvation, gather us, with all those who have died, into your sacred heart. Grant us to sing your praises for all eternity.

God our salvation;

People Thank you.

Officiant All these things we have spoken, and those which we name in the silence of our hearts, we pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord who with you and the Holy Spirit are one God, forever and ever.
Amen.

The General Thanksgiving

All 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

Dismissal and Concluding Sentence

Officiant Let us bless the Lord

People **Thanks be to God.**

Alleluia. Alleluia. Amen. Amen.

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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