

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
MACON, GEORGIA



ADVENT IV LESSONS & CAROLS

Sunday, December 20, 2020 at Home

WELCOME!

Welcome in the Lord's name to St. Paul's Episcopal Church. No matter who you are and where you are on your journey of faith, you are welcome! You bless us with your presence. We are gathering in unique ways during this time of COVID, thus we are worshipping in our Outdoor Chapel. Please review all the posted instructions, found in the email confirming your registration and in the back of this bulletin. We all are following these guidelines to love and care for one another.

When you exit your car, please wear a mask until you return to your vehicle. Due to our safety guidelines, ushers will seat you based upon the size of your group or special needs. You may place your chair (s) in your assigned space; please remain there during worship. During worship, at various times we stand, sit, and kneel; these instructions are for those who are physically able. An *** indicates the people stand**. There will be no bulletin or handouts, processions, congregational singing, or offering plate. 'The Peace' will be passed without touch, using some distanced sign of peace. When our service concludes, please return to your vehicle with safe distancing and do not congregate. All these precautions are to protect each other's health. Thank you for your cooperation. We are delighted you are with us, and hope to see you again at future parish events.

REGARDING COMMUNION

All who seek Christ are welcome at God's Table. After the invitation to communion, Eucharist in one kind (bread only), wrapped in a plastic bag for safety, will be brought to you. In our Eucharistic Theology, receiving in one kind is efficacious as fully partaking of the Eucharistic feast. Please remain in your space. You may stand and hold your hands out to receive, but standing is not necessary. Take the bread out and consume reverently. Please retain your plastic bag and dispose of properly. If you do not wish to receive, cross your arms over your chest and you will receive a blessing.

THE SEASON OF ADVENT

Advent is a season of anticipation and expectancy. We are encouraged to notice the changes in worship ... the color is purple, we stand during the Eucharistic prayers in anticipation, and the readings point us to the birth of Christ. Greenery is placed at the altar instead of flowers, and an Advent wreath will be lit at each service. These variations throughout the church year help us pay attention that something during Advent is different. As we begin the new Church year, we begin to relive our story of faith anew. We explore the significance of the Incarnation as we anticipate the coming of Christ, Immanuel, God with us. Pay attention to the changing "season" and renew your faith. May Christ be revealed to you this Advent and Christmas. Prepare ye the way of the Lord.

ADVENT LESSONS & CAROLS

**indicates people stand | BCP is Book of Common Prayer | Hymnal 1982*

Welcome to St. Paul's Episcopal Church and this service of Advent Lessons and Carols. Advent is a season of both quiet reflection and joyful expectation. This service is intended to be a time of spiritual preparation, as we watch and wait for the coming of the Kingdom of God. Through our experience of sacred Word and music, the story of the coming of Christ gradually unfolds and deepens our understanding of God's message of love and redemption. The liturgy itself embodies the sense of Advent movement — through the choir's processions and in the increasingly powerful prophecies and promises of Holy Scripture. May these words and this music propel you quietly toward the true joy of Christmas.

Prelude *"Maria-Theresia v. Paradis"* Jason Economides & Patty Baser, strings

The Congregation is seated in silence in preparation for worship.

***A Bidding Prayer**

Celebrant: Dear People of God: In the season of Advent, it is our responsibility and joy to prepare ourselves to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go even to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger. Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of the God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against Him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus; and let us look forward to the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs of praise. But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace and justice on the earth; for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in this city. And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless; the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; as well as those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ. Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore. And now, to sum up all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us:

***All: 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.**

Celebrant: The Almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of Angels bring us all.

People: Amen.

***Hymn**

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

Hymn 56

1 O come, O come, Immanuel,[`]
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,
who ordered all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show
and teach us in its ways to go. Refrain

3 O come, O come, great Lord of might,
who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times did give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe. Refrain

4 O come, O Branch of Jesse's stem,
unto your own and rescue them!
From depths of hell your people save,
and give them victory o'er the grave. *Refrain*

5 O come, O Key of David, come
and open wide our heavenly home.
Make safe for us the heavenward road
and bar the way to death's abode. *Refrain*

6 O come, O Bright and Morning Star,
and bring us comfort from afar!
Dispel the shadows of the night
and turn our darkness into light. *Refrain*

7 O come, O King of nations, bind
in one the hearts of all mankind.
Bid all our sad divisions cease
and be yourself our King of Peace. *Refrain*

1 O come, O come, Immanuel,[`]
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

The First Lesson

Genesis 3: 1-15

God creates man and woman to live in obedience to him in the Garden of Eden.

A reading from the book of Genesis.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

***Carol**

"Sleepers Wake"

Hymn 61 (Jason and Patty, strings)

1 "Sleepers, wake!" A voice astounds us;
the shout of rampart guards surrounds us:

"Awake, Jerusalem, arise!"

Midnight's peace their cry has broken,
their urgent summons clearly spoken:

"The time has come, O maidens wise!

Rise up, and give us light;

the Bridegroom is in sight.

Alleluia!

Your lamps prepare and hasten there,
that you the wedding feast may share.”

2 Zion hears the watchmen singing;
her heart with joyful hope is springing;
she wakes and hurries through the night.

Forth he comes, her Bridegroom glorious
in strength of grace, in truth victorious:
her star is risen, her light grows bright.

Now come, most worthy Lord,
God’s Son, incarnate Word,
Alleluia!

We follow all and heed your call
to come into the banquet hall.

3 Lamb of God, the heavens adore you;
let saints and angels sing before you,
as harps and cymbals swell the sound.
Twelve great pearls, the city’s portals:
through them we stream to join the immortals
as we with joy your throne surround.

No eye has known the sight,
no ear heard such delight:

Alleluia!

Therefore we sing to greet our King;
for ever let our praises ring.

The Second Lesson

Isaiah 40: 1-11

God comforts his people and calls on them to prepare for redemption.

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out!" And

I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

***Carol**

"Comfort, Comfort"

Hymn 67

1 Comfort, comfort ye my people,
speak ye peace, thus saith our God;
comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning 'neath their sorrow's load.

Speak ye to Jerusalem
of the peace that waits for them;
tell her that her sins I cover,
and her warfare now is over.

2 Hark, the voice of one that crieth
in the desert far and near,
calling us to new repentance
since the kingdom now is here.
Oh, that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way;
let the valleys rise to meet him,
and the hills bow down to greet him.

3 Make ye straight what long was crooked,
make the rougher places plain:
let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits his holy reign.

For the glory of the Lord
Now o'er earth is shed abroad;
and all flesh shall see the token
that the word is never broken.

The Third Lesson

Jeremiah 31:31-34

A new covenant is promised which will be written in our hearts.

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt-- a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 25:1-9

Ad te, Domine, levavi

1 To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul;
my God, I put my trust in you; *
let me not be humiliated,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.
2 Let none who look to you be put to shame; *
let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.
3 Show me your ways, O Lord, *
and teach me your paths.
4 Lead me in your truth and teach me, *
for you are the God of my salvation;
in you have I trusted all the day long.
5 Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love, *
for they are from everlasting.
6 Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; *
remember me according to your love
and for the sake of your goodness, O Lord.
7 Gracious and upright is the Lord; *
therefore he teaches sinners in his way.
8 He guides the humble in doing right *
and teaches his way to the lowly.
9 All the paths of the Lord are love and faithfulness *
to those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.

The Fourth Lesson

Baruch 4:36-5:9

The Scribe Baruch urges the people to look East because salvation is at hand.

A reading from the book of the prophet Baruch.

Look toward the east, O Jerusalem, and see the joy that is coming to you from God. Look, your children are coming, whom you sent away; they are coming, gathered from east and west, at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing in the glory of God. Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem, and put on forever the beauty of the glory from God. Put on the robe of the righteousness that comes from God; put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting; for God will show your splendor everywhere under heaven. For God will give you evermore the name, "Righteous Peace, Godly Glory." Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height; look toward the east, and see your children gathered from west and east at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing that God has remembered them. For they went out from you on foot, led away by their enemies; but God will bring them back to you, carried in glory, as on a royal throne. For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low and the valleys filled up, to make level ground, so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God. The woods and every fragrant tree have shaded Israel at God's command. For God will lead Israel with joy, in the light of his glory, with the mercy and righteousness that come from him.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Carol

"Once He Came in Blessing"

Hymn 53 vs. 1,3,4

1 Once he came in blessing,
All our ills redressing;
came in likeness lowly,
Son of God most holy;
bore the cross to save us,
hope and freedom gave us.
3 Thus if thou canst name him,
not ashamed to claim him,
but wilt trust him boldly,
nor dost love him coldly,
he will then receive thee,
heal thee, and forgive thee.
4 One who thus endureth
bright reward secureth.
Come then, O Lord Jesus,

from our sins release us;
let us here confess thee,
till in heaven we bless thee.

The Fifth Lesson

Luke 21:25-36

The coming of the Son of Man

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke.

Jesus said, "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Carol *"Tell Out My Soul"*

Hymn 438

1 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!

Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;

tender to me the promise of his word;

in God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.

2 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!

Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;

his mercy sure, from age to age the same;

his holy name -- the Lord, the Mighty One.

3 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!

Powers and dominions lay their glory by.

Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,

the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

4 Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
to children's children and forevermore!

Prayers

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Celebrant: 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.

People: Amen.

Celebrant: O Lord our God, make us watchful and keep us faithful as we await the coming of your Son our Lord; that, when he shall appear, he may not find us sleeping in sin but active in his service and joyful in his praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

Leader: Judah and Jerusalem, fear not, nor be dismayed;

People: Tomorrow go ye forth, and the Lord, he will be with you.

Leader: Stand ye still, and ye shall see the salvation of the Lord.

People: Tomorrow go ye forth, and the Lord, he will be with you.

Leader: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

People: Tomorrow go ye forth, and the Lord, he will be with you.

Leader: We wait for thy loving-kindness, O Lord.

People: In the midst of thy temple.

Celebrant: 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.

People: Amen.

The Advent Blessing

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin. **Amen.**
May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. **Amen.**

May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

***Final Hymn** *“Lo, He Comes With Clouds”* **Hymn 57 (Jason & Patty, strings)**

1 Lo! he comes with clouds descending,
once for our salvation slain;
thousand, thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ the Lord returns to reign.

2 Every eye shall now behold him,
robed in dreadful majesty;
those who set at nought and sold him,
pierced, and nailed him to the tree,
deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
deeply wailing,
shall the true Messiah see.

3 Those dear tokens of his passion
still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation
to his ransomed worshipers;
with what rapture, with what rapture,
with what rapture,
gaze we on those glorious scars!

4 Yea, amen! let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the power and glory;
claim the kingdom for thine own:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

Postlude

“Fugue in G major”

Dietrich Buxtehude



ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



CLERGY

The Rt. Rev. Robert C. Wright, *Bishop*
The Rt. Rev. Don A. Wimberly, *Assisting Bishop*
The Rev. Bryan Hinson, *Priest-in-Charge*
The Rev. Dr. Gary Abbott, *Retired Priest-in-Residence*

STAFF

Nadine Cheek, *Organist/Choirmaster*
Dena Hobbs, *Campus Ministry*
Leah Lowndes, *Parish Administrator*
Akram Saymeh, *Bookkeeper*
Mary Patmon, *Custodian*

VESTRY MEMBERS

Teri Kramer, *Treasurer* | Russell Lewis, *Interim Chancellor* | Tamika Sanders, *Clerk*

Class of 2020

Dustin Gilmore
Alex Mitchell
Tamika Sanders

Class of 2021

Charlie Bradshaw
Teri Kramer
Nancy Ogilvie

Class of 2022

Billie Abbott
Andrea Freeman
Sean McCrackin

Thank you for joining us in worship.

We pray for those on our parish prayer list: Annelise, Betty, Bubber, Carol, Dawson, George, Jamie, Jim, Kaleb, Kay, Kimberly, Richard, Terri

We pray for those on our long term parish prayer list: Beatrice, Betty, Blair, the Broome family, Brother, the Coley family, Donna, Frank, George, the Gregory family, Jim, Mike, Rebecca, Richard, Vernon