

First Sunday in Advent

November 29, 2020

Welcome to St. John

We are very pleased that you have joined us for worship today. If you are visiting for the first time, we have a welcome gift for you. We also appreciate any comments or suggestions that you may have. Thank you for coming today!

Holy Communion is celebrated weekly, and we offer guidance for those visiting in the following pages underneath the heading “Communion Distribution.”

Our bulletin is all you will need for worship this morning. We have inserted helpful information in *italics* including when, if able, to stand and sit. Congregation responses are in **bold**.

Children are welcome at St. John. We have worship activity bags located at each sanctuary entrance. All children are encouraged to come forward during Children’s Time. Our parents of children are welcome to use the Family Room at any time during worship—it is located in the Nursery School wing (upstairs). The room is open for families to use as needed for their children. We also have a baby changing station in the restroom by the main office. Please ask an usher if you have any questions.

Following our services, we will have beverages, cookies and conversation in our Great Room. We hope that you will join us and introduce yourself to others.

St. John Lutheran Church 1802 Skippack Pike, Blue Bell, PA 19422
www.stjohnbluebell.org www.facebook.com/stjohnbluebell
Nursery School website: www.stjohnsns.com
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Our Council Members are listed on our website.

Celebrating 250 years of mission and ministry, 1769-2019.



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Order for Worship

Prelude ~ “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Quartet

O come, O Come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O Branch of Jesse, free from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save and give then vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

Text: *Psalteriolum Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln 1710

Music: Nikolaus Herman, arr. P. Hurlbutt

Confession and Forgiveness

P: *All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
whose forgiveness is sure
and whose steadfast love endures forever.

C: **Amen.**

P: Together let us honestly and humbly confess
that we have not lived as God desires.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Loving and forgiving God,

C: we confess that we are held captive by sin.

In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray.

We have not welcomed the stranger;

we have not loved our neighbor;

we have not been Christ to one another.

Restore us, O God.

Wake us up and turn us from our sin.

Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.

P: People of God, hear this glad news:
by God's endless grace
your sins are forgiven, and you are free—
free from all that holds you back
and free to live in the peaceable realm of God.
May you be strengthened in God's love,
† comforted by Christ's peace,
and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn ~ “Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending”

The musical score consists of four staves of music in common time, key signature of one sharp (F#), and treble clef. The lyrics are integrated into the musical lines.

1 Lo! he comes with clouds descend - ing,
2 Now re - demp - tion, long - ex - pect - ed,
3 Yea, a - men, let all a - dore thee,

once for our sal - va - tion slain;
comes in sol - emn splen - dor near;
high on thine e - ter - nal throne;

thou - sand thou - sand saints at - tend - ing
all the saints this world re - ject - ed
Sav - ior, take the pow'r and glo - ry,

join to sing the glad re - frain:
thrill the trum - pet sound to hear:
claim the king - dom as thine own.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -

 lu - ia! Christ the Lord re - turns to reign.
 lu - ia! See the day of God ap - pear!
 lu - ia! Thou shalt reign, and thou a - lone!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.
 Music: HELMSLEY, Thomas Olivers, 1725–1799

Greeting

P: The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with you all.
 C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
 C: Amen.

Children's Message

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Advent Blessing

Blessed are you, God of Jacob, for you promise to transform weapons of war into implements of planting and harvest and to teach us your way of peace; you promise that our night of sin is far gone and that your day of salvation is dawning.

As we light the first candle on this wreath, wake us from our sleep, wrap us in your light, empower us to live honorably, and guide us along your path of peace.

O house of Jacob, come,
let us walk in the light of the Lord. Amen.

Word

First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

A: 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.

Word of God, word of life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 80

(Cantor, then ALL)

Lord, make us turn to you, let us see your face and we shall be saved.

O shepherd of Israel, hear us, shine forth from your cherubim throne.
O Lord, rouse up your might, O Lord, come to our help. **Refrain.**

God of hosts, turn again we implore, look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it, the vine your right hand has planted. **Refrain.**

May your hand be on the one you have chosen, the one you have given your strength.
And we shall never forsake you again; give us life that we may call upon your name. **Refrain.**

Gospel: Mark 13:24-37

P: The Holy Gospel according to Mark.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

P: 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.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Following a time of silence for reflection, the assembly may rise.

Hymn of the Day ~ “Wake, Awake for Night is Flying”

1 Wake, a - wake, for night is fly - ing, the watch-men
 2 Zi - on hears the watch-men sing - ing, and all her
 3 Glo - ri - a! Let heav'n a - dore you! Let saints and

on the heights are cry - ing; a - wake, Je - ru - sa - lem, at last.
 heart with joy is spring - ing. She wakes, she ris - es from her gloom.
 an - gels sing be - fore you, with harp and cym-bal's clear-est tone.

Mid - night hears the wel - come voic - es, and at the
 Her dear friend comes down, all glo - rious, the strong in
 Gates of pearl, twelve por - tals gleam - ing, lead us to

thrill-ing cry re - joic - es: “Come forth, you maid - ens! Night is past.
 grace, in truth vic - to - rious: her star is ris'n; her light is come.
 bliss be - yond all dream - ing, with an - gel choirs a - round your throne.

The bride - groom comes! A - wake; your lamps with glad - ness take!"
Now come, O Bless - ed One, Lord Je - sus, God's own Son.
No eye has caught the light, no ear the thun - d'ring might

Sing ho - san - na! Rise and pre - pare the feast to share;
Sing ho - san - na! Oh, hear the call! Come one, come all,
of such glo - ry. There we will go: what joy we'll know!

go, meet the bride - groom, who draws near.
and fol - low to the ban - quet hall.
There sweet de - light will ev - er flow.

Text: Philipp Nicolai, 1556-1608; tr. composite
Music: WACHET AUF, Philipp Nicolai
Text © 1999 Augsburg Fortress.

Apostles' Creed

A: *Together, let us confess our faith:*

C: **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 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.

Prayers of Intercession

A: God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

A: We pray for the ministry we share in Christ's name. As you draw near, open our hearts to your call for justice, peace, and healing, open our arms to embrace those with needs the world. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

A: We pray for this planet in need of restoration: for devastated habitats, polluted waters, thawing ice, blazing fires, swelling floods, and long-lasting droughts. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

A: We pray for all people who care for others in our community and around the world. Fill them with compassion and wisdom, may they respond with healing for those who are sick, with justice for those who are oppressed, with welcome for those who are excluded, and with comfort for those who suffer. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

A: We pray for all who are challenged by the pandemic: for those facing economic hardships, loss of jobs or threats to housing and food; for those facing loneliness and isolation; for those discouraged by guidelines; for those who are losing patience; for those who must make difficult decisions. May you come to them, may they cast their burdens on you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

A: We pray for the people in our families and congregation who live with depression, anxiety, chronic pain, addiction, and other invisible illnesses. Ease their suffering and support them when they struggle. Cheryl, Susan, John, Martin, Jenny, Scott, Adina, Kathy, John, Eric, Tom, Jack, Jon, Sue, Lauren, Bill, Dave, Gladys, Dylan, Randy, Dorothy, Judy, Jim, Gerry, Hadley, Robert, Abby, Laura, and Donna. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

A: We give thanks for the lives and witness of those who died while waiting for justice, peace, or healing, those whose names we know and those whose names are known only to you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

Anthem~ “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers”

Quartet

Rejoice, rejoice, believers, and let yours lights appear;
the evening is advancing, and darker night is near.
The bridegroom is arising and soon is drawing night.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle; at midnight comes the cry.

The watchers on the mountain proclaim the bridegroom near;
go forth as he approaches with alleluias clear.
The marriage feast is waiting; the gates wide open stand.
Arise, o heirs of glory; the bridegroom is at hand.

The saints, who here in patience their cross and suff'ring bore,
shall live and reign forever when sorrow is no more.
Around the throne of glory the Lamb they shall behold;
in triumph cast before him their diadems of gold.

Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;
arise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this benighted sphere.
With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see
the day of earth's redemption that sets your people free! Amen.

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660

Music: Swedish folk tune, arr. John Ferguson

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

During our time away, we will not be passing the offering plates. We are grateful for all who are able to continue their support of St. John. There are three ways to share tithes and offerings:

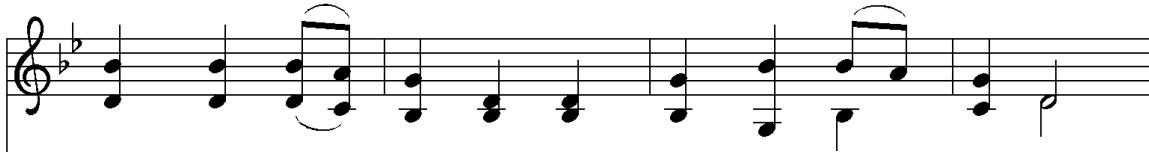
- 1. Simply giving - You can arrange for a regular gift (weekly, monthly, quarterly) to be deducted from a bank account. Please contact Marcie Godby, our bookkeeper, to arrange for this (stjohn1802bookkeeper@gmail.com).*
- 2. You may go to St. John's website, <https://www.stjohnbluebell.org/>, and under "Quick Links" hit the "Online Giving and Donations" button.*
- 3. You may put your offering envelope (checks are preferred) in another stamped envelope and mail it to St. John: 1802 Skippack Pike, Blue Bell, PA 19422 (Attn: Marcie).*

Take a moment and reflect on the gifts we have received – even in these difficult days.

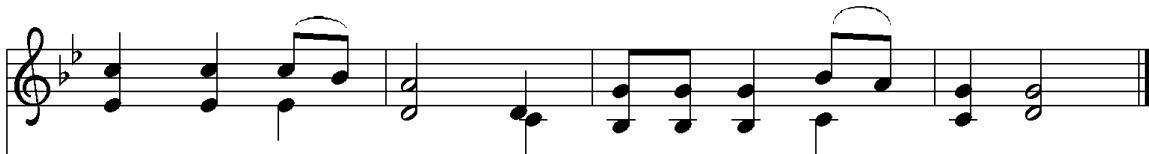
Voluntary~ “Come Now, O Prince of Peace”

Roberta Rowland-Raybold

Offertory Hymn~ “Come Now, O Prince of Peace”



1 Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one body.
2 Come now, O God of love, make us one body.



Come, O Lord Jesus, receive your people.
Come, O Lord Jesus, receive your people.



Text: Geonyong Lee, b. 1947; tr. Marion Pope
Music: OSOSÔ, Geonyong Lee, b. 1947
Text and music © Geonyong Lee.

Offertory Prayer

P: Generous God,
you have created all that is,
and you provide for us in every season.
Bless all that we offer,
that through these gifts the world will receive your blessing.
In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray.

C: Amen.

Lord's Prayer

**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,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Benediction

- P: The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,
the long-expected Savior fill you with love,
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey,
☩ now and forever.
- C: **Amen.**

Sending Hymn~ “The King Shall Come”

A musical score for two voices (SATB) in common time and G major. The music consists of two staves: a soprano staff (treble clef) and an alto staff (bass clef). The soprano part begins with a half note followed by eighth-note chords. The alto part begins with a quarter note followed by eighth-note chords. The lyrics are integrated into the music, appearing below the notes. The score includes five stanzas of lyrics, with the fifth stanza being the final verse.

1 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light tri - um-phant breaks,
4 Oh, bright - er than that glo - rious morn shall dawn up - on our race
5 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light and beau - ty brings.

when beau - ty gilds the east - ern hills and life to joy a - wakes.

the day when Christ in splen-dor comes, and we shall see his face.
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your peo - ple pray: come quick-ly, King of kings.

Text: John Brownlie, 1859-1925
Music: CONSOLATION, A. Davisson, *Kentucky Harmony*, 1816; arr. Theodore A. Beck, 1929-2003
Arr. © 1969 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude~ “Consolation”

Paul W. Hofreiter

Additional music links:

“Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme”

<https://youtu.be/A1WoYqVfio0>

“My Lord What a Morning”

<https://youtu.be/JNOSzk190iw>

“All Earth is Hopeful”

<https://youtu.be/dq5BEfErVVY>

Assisting with Worship

Bridge Pastor

Pastor Stephen Godsall-Myers

Director of Music

Lawrence Baker

Lector

Nick Czincila

Prayers of Intercession

Makayla Wanner

Apostles' Creed

Megan Kiefski

Quartet

Deborah Swider, Maja Lisa Fritzhuspen,

Robert Laird, Jonathan Oehler

Advent – a season for preparation: The end of November (Nov. 29th) brings us Advent. Our worship services will include the lighting of the Advent Wreath with tapes submitted by St. John families. Many families have a small wreath-lighting devotion each evening of Advent. We still have copies of a family devotional booklet at the church. There are also many organizations that make Advent devotions available on-line. Here are a few:

Luther Seminary, Minnesota

"O Lord, How Shall I Met You?"

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IJMVdn54_YGhTzIN7Atzwgi9NWTDlexh/view

ELCAWorld Hunger

https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/ELCA-AdventCalendar2020.pdf?_ga=2.237718660.528584357.1605802343-1589849684.1603378395

Liberty Lutheran

<http://lutherancongregationservices.blogspot.com>

AdventFest – The modified event will focus on a tree decorating celebration at St. John on December 13 from 2:00 – 3:00 pm. We are inviting members to come with their ornaments (and masks) to safely decorate the tree that will provide light to the neighbors (drivers on Rt 73) and our congregation when we gather for Christmas Eve.

Several of the AdventFest Team have assembled seasonal crafts and kits to make ornaments. The bags will be available for pick-up in the Great Room on Tuesday, December 1 and Thursday, December 3 from 10:15-3:00 pm. If there are still bags to be distributed, the Great Room will be opened on December 6 from 1:00 – 2:00pm. If you are coming on Tuesday or Thursday, you should call the church office, 215-256-6579.

For December 13, you can bring ornaments you made with the St. John craft bag materials or ornaments of your own. We will have floral wire available to affix the ornaments to the tree.

Christmas Eve – St. John will provide two opportunities to celebrate the Nativity of our Lord on Thursday, December 24. At 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm, there will be “Shepherds in the Field” services – they will be short (1/2 hour or so). But each service will include the ‘glow of the Christmas Gospel’ and *Silent Night*. In addition to these two live services, there will be a taped Christmas Eve service featuring Christmas message, liturgy and music.

