

# ***Bethesda Episcopal Church***

**The Second Sunday of Advent**

**10 December 2023**

***Organ*** Improvisation on 'Basque Carol'

*All stand as the choir and minsters enter.*

***The Opening Hymn #76***

*From the Hymnal 1982*

*All remain standing. At the chancel step, the Celebrant begins the service, saying,*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

*After lighting the candle for the Second Sunday of Advent, the Celebrant says*

Light and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke. (*Luke 3:2b-6*)

The word of God came to John, son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

***The Collect of The Day***

<i>Celebrant</i>	The Lord be with you.
<b><i>People</i></b>	<b>And with thy spirit.</b>
<i>Celebrant</i>	Let us pray.

Merciful God, who didst send thy messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*All sit.*

***The First Reading***

*Isaiah 40:1-11*

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 for ever.

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.

*The Lector concludes  
The People respond*

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God**

*Remain seated.*

**The Gradual:** Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

*John Joubert (1927-2019)*

You have been gracious to your land, O Lord, \* you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

You have forgiven the iniquity of your people \* and blotted out all their sins.

I will listen to what the Lord God is saying, \* for he is speaking peace to his faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to him.

Truly, his salvation is very near to those who fear him, \* that his glory may dwell in our land.

Mercy and truth have met together; \* righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Truth shall spring up from the earth, \* and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

The Lord will indeed grant prosperity, \* and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness shall go before him, \* and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.

**The Second Reading**

*2 Peter 3:8-15a*

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

*The Lector concludes  
The People respond*

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God**

*All stand.*

**The Alleluia**



Al - le - lu - ia. \_\_\_\_\_

*Cantor:* I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the house of the Lord.

(Ps122:1)

*All repeat:* **Alleluia.**

*Remain standing.*

**The Holy Gospel**

*Mark 1:1-8*

*Celebrant  
People*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Mark.  
**Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’”

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

*Celebrant  
People*

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

**The Sermon**

*Fr Kriss*

*After the sermon, all stand.*

*The Nicene Creed*    *Said by all*

**I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
and of all things visible and invisible;  
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of his Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God;  
begotten, not made;  
being of one substance with the Father;  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation  
came down from heaven,  
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered and was buried:  
and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,  
and ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father;  
and he shall come again, with glory,  
to judge both the quick and the dead;  
whose kingdom shall have no end.  
And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord, and Giver of Life,  
who proceedeth from the Father and the Son;  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified;  
who spake by the Prophets.  
And I believe one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church;  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins;  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*All kneel.*

***The Prayers of The People***

In our prayers for the Anglican Communion, we remember this week the Church of Pakistan; and in the Albany Diocese, for chaplains serving around the diocese in schools, hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, and among first responders.

We ask God's blessing on those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week; and those whose year's mind falls at this time.

Let us give glory to God on high, who from his fullness has received grace upon grace, saying *Lord, graciously hear us.*

For the holy Church of God throughout the world, that with one heart we may rejoice in the Word made flesh. Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For good will in the hearts of all; and on earth, peace. Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For the poor, the outcast and the homeless; for the helpless, the lonely and the unloved. Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For those who have asked for our prayers, especially, Penny, David, Jude, Paul, Al, Jerilyn, and Robert. Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For all who have gone before us, whose hope was in the Word made flesh. Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

With the blessed Virgin Mary, and all the host of heaven, let our voices rise to praise God's glory. Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

*The Celebrant says a concluding prayer.*

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which thy 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 quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### ***The Confession and Absolution***

Ye who do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways: Draw near with faith, and make your humble confession to Almighty God, devoutly kneeling.

**Almighty God,  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
maker of all things, judge of all men:  
We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness,  
which we from time to time most grievously have committed,  
by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty,  
provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us.  
We do earnestly repent,  
and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings;  
the remembrance of them is grievous unto us,  
the burden of them is intolerable.  
Have mercy upon us,  
have mercy upon us, most merciful Father;  
for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,  
forgive us all that is past;  
and grant that we may ever hereafter  
serve and please thee in newness of life,  
to the honor and glory of thy Name;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*The Celebrant says the Absolution.*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*All stand. At the exchange of the Peace, please remain in your pew.*

### **The Peace**

*Celebrant*      The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
*People*            **And with thy spirit.**

### **Hymn at The Offertory #59**

*From the Hymnal 1982*

*Remain standing*

### **The Eucharistic Prayer**

*Celebrant*      The Lord be with you.  
*People*            **And with thy spirit.**  
*Celebrant*      Lift up your hearts.  
*People*            **We lift them up unto the Lord.**  
*Celebrant*      Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.  
*People*            **It is meet and right so to do.**

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God. Because thou didst give Jesus Christ, thine only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, was made very Man of the substance of the Virgin Mary his mother; that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become thy children. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee and saying,

### **The Sanctus and Benedictus**

*Healey Willan (1880-1968)*

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - - - ly, Lord God of Hosts:  
Hea-ven and earth are full of thy glo - ry. Glo - ry be to  
thee, O Lord Most High. Bless - ed is he that com - eth in the



*All kneel.*

All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he *brake* it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same. And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord; By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **Amen**

## ***Our Father***

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

**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.**

## ***The Fraction***

*Celebrant* Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
*People* **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

## ***The Prayer of Humble Access***

**We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.**

***The Agnus Dei*** from Communion Service in Eb *Edward Bairstow (1874-1946)*

*O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.  
O Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.*

*Communion is distributed at the chancel step.*

## ***At The Communion***

*Choir: Alma Redemptoris* *Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-1594)*

*Alma Redemptoris Mater, quae pervia caeli porta manes,  
et stella maris, succurre cadenti, surgere qui curat, populo;  
Tu quae genuisti, natura mirante, tuum sanctum Genitorem,  
Virgo prius ac posterius, Gabrielis ab ore sumens illud Ave, peccatorum miserere.*

*Loving Mother of the Redeemer, Gateway of Heaven,  
and Star of the Sea, give aid to a falling people that strives to rise.  
Thou who begot thy holy Creator, while all nature marveled,  
Virgin before and after, receiving that "Ave" from the mouth of Gabriel,  
have mercy on us.*

*After Communion, all kneel. The Celebrant says*



## ***The Prayer after Communion***

Let us pray. Keep us, O Lord, while we tarry on this earth, in a serious seeking after thee, and in an affectionate walking with thee, all the days of our life: that when thou comest, we may be found, not hiding our talent, nor yet asleep with our lamp unfurnished, but waiting and longing for our Lord, our glorious King, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## ***The Blessing and Dismissal***

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*Celebrant*            Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
*People*                **Thanks be to God.**

## ***The Closing Hymn #73***

*From the Hymnal 1982*

**Organ**

Veni, Emmanuel

*Robert J. Powell (b.1932)*

## **Today at Bethesda**

The **Advent wreath** is given in memory of Bruce Solenski by Kathleen and Mark Anspach. For many years, Bruce brought beauty and grace to the altar of Bethesda through his elegant and creative floral arrangements. He continues to be fondly remembered, especially during the Advent-Christmas and Easter seasons, when he dedicated his talents to the glory of God.

**Readers** Thank you to those reading and leading prayers at services today:  
**8am** Lisa Edele    **10am** Judy Aronstamm & Paula Pinion

There is a **Bible Study** between services, beginning at 9.20am. All welcome.

**Refreshments** Join us for coffee following the 10am liturgy. Thank you to Tim and Libby Smith-Holmes for hosting today.

**Special Monthly Envelope** The Casavant organ, located in the chancel of the church, has served Bethesda Church well since it replaced the historic E.M. Skinner pipe organ in 1968. Nevertheless, the last 55 years of service have shown considerable wear on the instrument, including deterioration of pipework and wind leaks; water damage, dust and debris; and a number of mechanical problems which affect the console and its functionality. The parish recently contracted with Foley-Baker, Inc. of Tolland, Connecticut, to provide an assessment of the organ. After visiting Bethesda last week, technicians from the firm provided initial feedback and advice concerning its ongoing care and maintenance which we will share with the parish in the coming weeks. Given the important role music plays in Bethesda's liturgical life, the Vestry has agreed that donations to December's special monthly envelope will be directed to organ maintenance.

**Thank you** to all who helped decorate the church yesterday!

### **Parish and Community Notices**

**Thursday Communion Service** In Advent season, there will be a celebration of Holy Communion on Thursdays at 12.10 pm, beginning 7th December.

**Lessons and Carols at Bethesda** Bethesda will hold a service of Lessons & Carols at 10 am on Sunday 17 December. The Choir will sing traditional French, English and German Carols, as well as works by Vaughan Williams, Warlock, Charpentier and Dave Brubeck. There will even be a piece about dragons ... *scriptural dragons, of course!* This is a perfect opportunity to extend an invitation to a friend or neighbor to attend Bethesda with you.

**Advent Recital at Bethesda** On Sunday, December 17th at 3:00 pm, Karen Becker, pianist, Carla Fisk, soprano, and Derek Stannard, tenor, will present an afternoon program called "Our Favorite Things" featuring music ranging from musical theater to opera, artsong, and oratorio. In addition to more traditional repertoire, there will be some Christmas favorites. Selections include excerpts from Handel's *Messiah*, Carlisle Floyd's *Suzannah*, Dvořák's *Rusalka*, Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*, and many others. This program also features guest sopranos Ashley Manocchi (Manhattan School of Music) and Amanda Robie (Opera Saratoga staff and alumni). Admission is free and open to the public.

**Lessons and Carols** at Christ Church, Ballston Spa. This service, which features carols of Advent and Christmas from Celtic, African American, and Shape Note traditions, will take place **this evening** at 4:00 p.m. and **tomorrow** at 7:30 p.m.

Bethesda parishioners are cordially invited to the annual performance of **The Boar's Head & Yule Log Pageant** at 7 p.m. on Friday, 15th December at the Hoosac School. Founded in 1889 by the Reverend Dr Edward Dudley Tibbits, Hoosac is a consciously Episcopal School, located at 14 Pine Valley Road, off routes NY-7 and US-22 in Hoosick, N Y. The school has performed the Boar's Head and Yule Log each year since 1892; it is the first and oldest performance of the Boar's Head in North America. Every student participates in costume. For further information and/or to RSVP (required) please call 518-686-7331.

**A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols** with music for brass, organ and choir is a traditional part of the run-up to Christmas at All Saints' Cathedral, Albany. This year's service takes place at 7pm on Tuesday, 19 December.

**LifeWorks Community Action** is a non-profit established in 1965 that works to alleviate poverty by assisting local families and individuals with a wide range of services. Bethesda is currently collecting canned goods for LifeWorks. Donated items may be left in the box by the side door entrance.

## **ADVENT & CHRISTMAS at Bethesda**

Thursday, 14 December      12.10pm Holy Communion

### ***Sunday, 17 December: Advent III***

8am Holy Communion  
10am Lessons and Carols  
3pm Recital

Thursday, 21 December      12.10pm Holy Communion

### ***Sunday, 24 December: Advent IV***

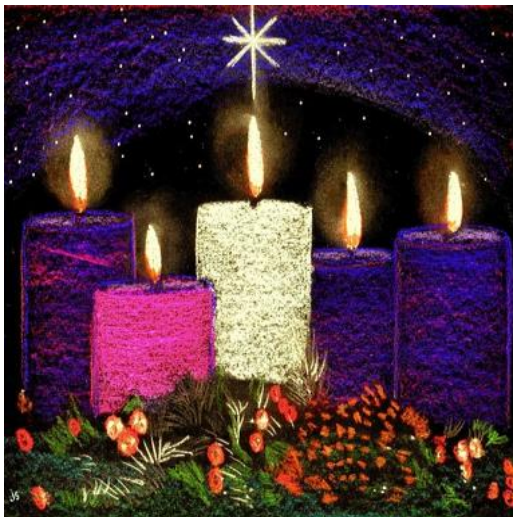
\*9am Holy Communion (said)

**Christmas Eve**      4pm Sung Eucharist  
10pm Procession and Sung Eucharist

**Christmas Day**      9am Holy Communion (said)

### ***Sunday, 31 December: Sunday after Christmas***

\*9am Holy Communion (said)





***Please place this form in the collection plate if you would like us to get in touch with you:***

*Name(s):*

*Phone:*

*Email address:*

*Home address:*

*Preferred contact method:*

*Contact Reason(s):*

- Visitor or new resident
- Would like more information about the church and/or worship
- Interested in opportunities to serve
- Would like to speak with or have a visit from the priest
- Would like information about pledge envelopes or regular giving to Bethesda
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

*Fr Charles Wallace, Priest in Charge*

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