

Bethesda Episcopal Church

The Second Sunday of Advent

8 December 2024

Organ Fughette on *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* Andreas Vetter (1666-1734)

All stand as the choir and minsters enter.

The Entrance Hymn #76

From the Hymnal 1982

All remain standing. At the chancel step, the Celebrant says,

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 Gospel according to Saint Mark. (1:4-8)

John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

The Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And with thy spirit.**

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 thy 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

Malachi 3:1-4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight-- indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Remain seated.

The Canticle: Benedictus Dominus Deus

Tone VIII.2



BLESS-ED be the Lord God of *Is-rael*; * for he hath visited and re-deemed his peo-ple;

And hath raised up a mighty salvation for us, * in the house of his ser-vant Da-vid;

As he spake by the mouth of his holy *Pro-phets*, * which have been since the world began;

That we should be saved from our en-emies, * and from the hand of all that hate us.

To perform the mercy promised to our fore-*fa-thers*, * and to remember his ho-ly co-venant;

To perform the oath which he sware to our forefather A-braham, * that he would give us;

That we being delivered out of the hand of our en-emies * might serve him with-out fear;

In holiness and righteousness be-fore him, * all the days of our life.

And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the *High-est*: * for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to pre-pare his ^way,

To give knowledge of salvation unto his peo-ple * for the remis-sion of their sins,

Through the tender mercy of our *God*; * whereby the day-spring from on high hath vi-sit-ed us;

To give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, * and to guide our feet in-to the way of peace.

Glory be to the Father, and to the *Son*, * and to the Ho-ly ^Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, * world with-out end. A-men.

Remain seated.

The Second Reading

Philippians 1:3-11

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

All stand.

The Alleluia



Cantor: I was glad when they said unto me; we will go into the house of the Lord.
(Ps 122:1)

All repeat: **Alleluia.**

Remain standing.

The Holy Gospel

Luke 3:1-6

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

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, 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 Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to thee, O Christ.

The Sermon

Jonathan Kimmel

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 the Province of the Episcopal Church of Sudan; and in the Albany Diocese, we pray for our bishop, Jeremiah, and all hospital, nursing home and prison chaplaincies.

We ask God's blessing on those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week; and 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 homeless, the outcast, and the sick, especially Joseph, Christopher and Manuel. Lord, hear us. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For all who have gone before us, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, remembering at this time, Cynthia Hodgson Murray. 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.**

Celebrant: Grant these prayers, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. **Amen.**

The Confession and Absolution

Celebrant: Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.

**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 #613

From the Hymnal 1982

Remain standing

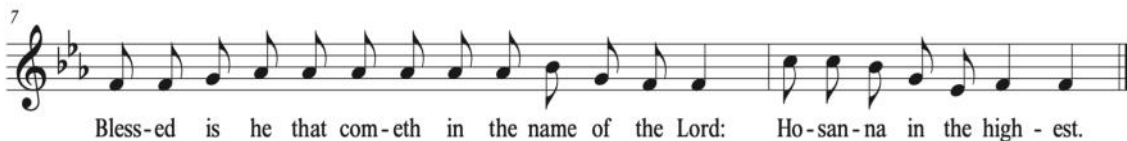
The Eucharistic Prayer

Celebrant	The Lord be with you.
People	And with thy spirit.
Célébrant	Lift up your hearts.
People	We lift them up unto the Lord.
Célébrant	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 send thy beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing. 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

John Merbecke (1510-1585)



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 Mass in g-minor *Thomas Matthews (1915-1999)*

*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 high altar. Please move at the direction of the ushers.

Choir Rorate Caeli *Leo Nestor (1948-2019)*

Refrain:

Rorate caeli desuper, et nubes pluant justum.

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness.

Be not angry, O Lord, nor remember our iniquities; Sion is a wilderness;
Jerusalem a desolation, the holy house where our fathers praised thee. *Refrain.*

Comfort ye my people, your salvation will come quickly.

Why has sorrow and sadness seized thee?

Fear not, for I will save thee. I am the Lord, your God,
The Holy One of Israel, Your Redeemer. *Refrain.*

Communion Hymn #75

From the Hymnal 1982

After Communion, all kneel.

The Prayer after Communion

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
People*

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

The Closing Hymn #73

From the Hymnal 1982

Organ Sleepers, Wake (*Wachet auf!*) *arr. Johann Gottfried Walther (1684-1748)*

Parish Notices

Thank you to those reading and leading prayers at services today:

8am Sonia Arcelay

10 am Libby Smith-Holmes and Rick Wissler

Welcome to Jonathan Kimmel (and his family) this morning. Jonathan is Director of Christian Formation at All Saints' Cathedral, Albany, and a candidate for ordination in this diocese.

The **flowers** in church today are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Audrey Ball, by her family and friends.

Please join us for **coffee and refreshments** following the 10am service. Thank you to Garrie Long for hosting today.

Today is the last day to donate towards the cost of decorating the Church for Christmas. See the back page of this bulletin for the order form.

The Greening of the Church Please join us on Saturday, 14 December, to begin our Christmas preparations. We'll need help hanging wreaths and garland, and tidying the church. Please bring work clothes and gloves.

Christmas Pageant Our annual Christmas Pageant takes place on 15 December at 10am. Please come to support our Sunday School families.

Bethesda Church holds its annual **Festival of Lessons and Carols** (in the context of the Eucharist) on 22 December at 10am.

Concert at Bethesda There will be a *Christmas Jazz Concert* with Chuck Lamb and Ria Curley on Sunday, 22 December at 3pm. Admission by donation.

Special Monthly Envelope for December 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. After visiting Bethesda in late autumn 2023, technicians from Foley-Baker, Inc. of Tolland, CT, provided initial feedback and advice concerning ongoing care and maintenance of the organ. Given the important role music plays in Bethesda's liturgical life, the Vestry has agreed that contributions to December's special monthly envelope will be directed to organ maintenance.

Parking The lot adjacent to the church offers free parking for the first two hours. You will require a credit card to enter and exit the lot which is accessible via Congress Street.

The Parish **Office**, at 178 Elm Street, is open Tuesday and Wednesday, 10–12.30pm.

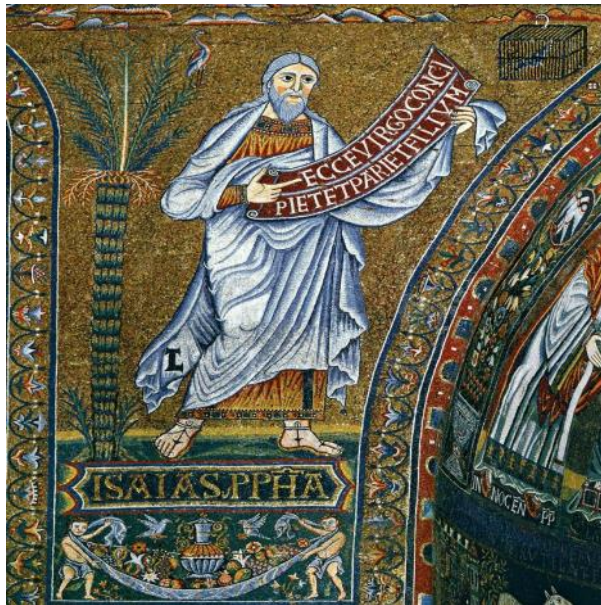
Beyond the Parish & Outreach

Christ Church Ballston Spa invites you to its 31st Annual **Lessons and Carols** featuring music from the Celtic, American and Shape Note traditions. The service takes place **tomorrow**, Monday 9th December at 7.30pm. The church is located at the corner of Routes 50 & 67 in Ballston Spa. Reception to follow. Free admission.

All Saints' Cathedral Choir sings **A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols** on Tuesday, 17 December at 7pm. Prelude music for organ and brass begins at 6.30pm. Free admission. The Cathedral is located at the corner of South Swan and Elk, in Albany.

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 food on behalf of LifeWorks. You may leave items in the box by the side door entrance of the church. Thank you!

Advent II: Prepare the way of the Lord!



Pictured above is a mosaic of Isaiah the prophet, from the Church of Santa Maria in Trastevere, Rome. The prophets—those who foretold the coming of Christ and who witnessed to God's kingdom of justice and righteousness—are represented by the second candle on the Advent wreath that we will light this morning. The Gospel reading today, (Luke 3.1-6) quotes from the prophecy of Isaiah: *the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord!* These words are fulfilled in the preaching of John the Baptist.

Then cleansed be every breast from sin; make straight the way for God within! says one of our Advent hymns. And so, in these 'waiting days' of Advent, let us seek to prepare the way for Christ's coming in blazing glory as Lord and Judge, and in the unexpected, unlooked-for simplicity of Bethlehem.

Advent & Christmas at Bethesda

Thursday, 12 December 12.10pm Holy Communion

Sunday, 15 December: Advent III

8am Holy Communion

10am Pageant & Sung Eucharist

Thursday, 19 December 12.10pm Holy Communion

Sunday, 22 December: Advent IV

8am Holy Communion (said)

10am Lessons and Carols

3pm *Christmas Jazz*: Chuck Lamb, piano

Christmas Eve

4pm Sung Eucharist

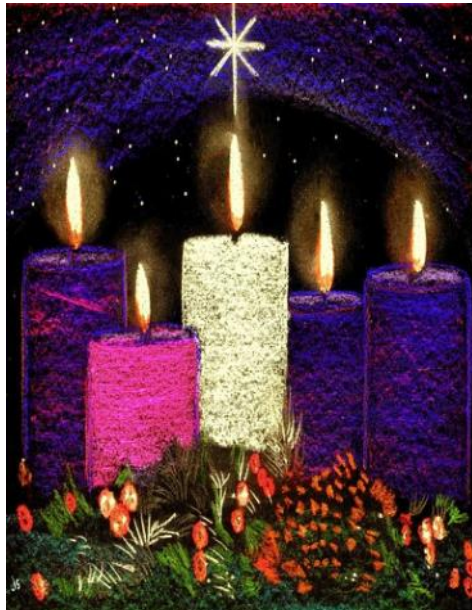
10pm Procession & Sung Eucharist

Christmas Day

9am Holy Communion (said)

Sunday, 29 December: Sunday after Christmas

*9am Holy Communion (said)





Christmas Flowers, Greens, Wreaths and Trees

This Christmas season offers an opportunity not only to purchase flowers for the Altar, but to sponsor other decorations that adorn our church at this special time of year. If you would like to contribute, please complete this form and return it to the church office. You can place your completed form in the offering plate or mail it to:

***Bethesda Church Office
178 Elm Street, Suite 5
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866***

I would like to purchase:

___ Poinsettia for \$25 each.

I would like to contribute towards the following:

___ Greens & Wreathes \$ _____

Given By: _____

In Honor of: _____

In Memory of: _____

Please return your completed form TODAY.