



**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025, 10:30 A.M.**  
**THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

HOLY EUCHARIST: RITE II

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THE PRELUDE

*Two Settings of "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"*

Wilbur Held; Peter Pindar Stearns

THE OPENING HYMN 65 *Prepare the way, O Zion*

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THE OPENING ACCLAMATION (BCP P. 355)

*All stand.*

*Celebrant* Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*People* **And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

*Celebrant* Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

(Organ)

Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and  
Might - y, Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One, have  
mer - cy on us. Ho - ly God,  
Ho - ly and Might - y, Ho - ly Im -  
mor - tal One, have mer - cy on us.  
Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and Might - y,  
Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One, have mer - cy on us.

## THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* Let us pray.

Merciful God, who sent your 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 lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## THE FIRST LESSON: ISAIAH 11:1-10

*All sit.*

A Reading from Isaiah.

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

*Reader* The Word of the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM 72:1-7; 18-19

*Sung by the choir.*

<sup>1</sup>Give the king your justice, O God, \*

and your righteousness to the King's Son;

<sup>2</sup>That he may rule your people righteously \*

and the poor with justice;

<sup>3</sup>That the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, \*

and the little hills bring righteousness.

<sup>4</sup>He shall defend the needy among the people; \*

he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.

<sup>5</sup>He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure, \*

from one generation to another.

<sup>6</sup>He shall come down like rain upon the mown field, \*

like showers that water the earth.

<sup>7</sup>In his time shall the righteous flourish; \*

there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

<sup>18</sup>Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, \*

who alone does wondrous deeds!

<sup>19</sup>And blessed be his glorious Name forever, \*

and may all the earth be filled with his glory. Amen.

A Reading from Paul's Letter to the Romans.

Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name"; and again he says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people"; and again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him"; and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope."

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

*Reader* The Word of the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

SEQUENCE HYMN 67 *Comfort, comfort ye my people*

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THE GOSPEL: MATTHEW 3:1-12

*Remain standing.*

*Priest* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

*People* **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'"

Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume 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.

"I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

*Priest* The Gospel of the Lord.

*People* **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

THE SERMON

The Rev. Dr. Duncan Johnston

*All sit.*

THE NICENE CREED (BCP P. 358)

*All stand.*

*The Celebrant and people say together*

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the Prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

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THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*All kneel as able.*

*Celebrant* In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

We pray today for those who serve in our local hospitals, care facilities, schools,  
colleges, and correctional facilities; for those who serve in law enforcement and in  
the legal system; and for members of the military and those serving overseas,  
especially Ben and Eric.

For all people in their daily life and work,  
**For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.**

For our President Donald, our Governor Kay, and our Mayor Steven;  
for members of our state legislature, and our national representatives and  
senators, that there may be respectful and wise governance for the welfare of our  
nation and of the world; and for victims of violence and conflict, especially in  
Eastern Europe and in the Middle East.  
For this community, the nation, and the world;  
**For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.**

For an awareness and sense of gratitude for the beauty of the world around us;  
For the just and proper use of your creation,  
**For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.**

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;  
**For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.**

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;  
**For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.**

For Sean, our Presiding Bishop, Glenda and Brian our Bishops, Duncan  
and Mark our priests, for Stewart our seminarian, and for all bishops and  
other ministers.

**For all who serve God in his Church.**

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation especially

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Hear us, Lord;  
**For your mercy is great.**

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life.

We will exalt you, O God our King;  
**And praise your Name for ever and ever.**

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal  
kingdom, especially those for whom the altar flowers have been given:

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;  
**Who put their trust in you.**

We pray to you also for the forgiveness of our sins.

**Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father;  
in your compassion forgive us our sins,  
known and unknown,  
things done and left undone;  
and so uphold us by your Spirit  
that we may live and serve you in newness of life,  
to the honor and glory of your Name;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Celebrant*

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins  
through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and  
by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

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THE PEACE

*The people stand to greet one another.*

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

## THE HOLY COMMUNION

*The celebrant will say an offertory sentence. The people sit.*

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM *Come Thou Redeemer Of the Earth* Michael Praetorius

*All stand to sing the offertory verse when the offertory is brought up to the altar.*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.**

**Praise him all creatures here below.**

**Praise him above ye heavenly host.**

**Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (PRAYER B, (BCP p. 367)

*All stand.*

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

*People* **We lift them up to the Lord.**

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People* **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

*Celebrant* It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, because you sent your 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, we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:



*All kneel as able.*

*Celebrant* We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

*Celebrant and People*

**We remember his death,**

**We proclaim his resurrection,**

**We await his coming in glory;**



*The Celebrant continues*

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever, **AMEN.**

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

*Celebrant and People*

**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.**

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THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

*Celebrant* Alleluia. Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

*People* Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

*The Celebrant presents the holy gifts to the congregation saying*

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

*The priest receives the Sacrament, and then serves the people with these words:*

The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life. **Amen.**

The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. **Amen.**

*You are very welcome to receive Holy Communion if you have been baptized in any Christian church. Those who wish not to receive Holy Communion may come to the altar rail, fold their arms across their chests, and receive a blessing from the priest.*

*Communion is offered in both kinds at the communion rail or station on the floor. Communicants may receive the wine by intinction or by drinking directly from the cup.*

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THE AGNUS DEI

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.*

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THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER (BCP p. 365)

*All kneel as able.*

*Celebrant*

Let us pray.

**Eternal God, heavenly Father,  
you have graciously accepted us as living members  
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,  
and you have fed us with spiritual food  
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.  
Send us now into the world in peace,  
and grant us strength and courage  
to love and serve you  
with gladness and singleness of heart;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## THE BLESSING

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Go now and prepare the way for the Lord.  
Share in the gospel of God's grace;  
Proclaim salvation and the forgiveness of sins;  
Make straight paths for justice and mercy.

And may God complete the good work begun in you;  
May Christ Jesus rejoice in your faith and compassion;  
and may the Holy Spirit fill your love with wisdom,  
and produce in you a harvest of righteousness.

THE CLOSING HYMN 59 *Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding* *All stand.*

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## THE DISMISSAL

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*Celebrant* Let us go forth in the name of Christ.  
*People* **Thanks be to God.**

THE POSTLUDE *Prelude on "Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying"* Robert Hobby

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## TODAY'S SERVERS

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**Clergy:** The Reverend Dr. Duncan Johnston, *Rector*  
The Reverend Mark E. Waldo, Jr., *Associate Rector*

**Director of Children's Formation:** Sarah Collier

**Director of Youth Ministries:** J.R. Marshall

**Organist:** Jim Conely

**Acolytes:** Maggie Mantooth, Robert Marshall, William Russell, Anna Lynn White

**Altar Guild:** Josie Eskridge, Libby Beck

**Lector and Intercessor:** Rich Anderson, Debbie Schremser

**Eucharistic Ministers:** Kat Dailey, Mary-Nelms Parsons

**Ushers/Greeters:** Keith Miller, Rich Anderson, Bill Johnson, Jim Marshall

**Flower Guild:** Betty Beale, Amy Marshall

**Flower Delivery Team:** Jeanette Lynn, George Mathews, Stanley Marks

**Videographer:** Sam Collier

**Instrumentalists:** Robby Gibson, *guitar*

**Altar Flowers are given in memory of:** Florence Marks Pratt, Merrill Edward Pratt, Merrill Edward Pratt II, Sarah Tatum Smith, Edith Smith Pratt, James Duke Paterson, William Benneville, Rhodes Rayford, Daniel Pratt

### Your prayers are requested for the following parishioners:

Dorothy Arrington, Ilouise Bradford, Renee Carlisle, Rick Durden, Marla Foster, Dave Funk, Carolyn Fillmore, Emily Crump Johannes, Carma Marks, Richard McCrory, Pat McDonald, Eddie McDowell, Martha Collier Mosely, Cameron Napier, Bud Nason, Elizabeth Potter, Shirley Price, Hawthorne Ramsey, Debbie Steindorff, Barbara Wallace, Florence Young

**Prayers are also requested for these friends:** Gail Alsobrook, Mac Burton, Willie "Bill" Carden, John Ferguson, Bob Geddie, Stephanie Holmes, Josie Lee, Charles Lewis, Leslie Little, Margaret Moore, Karen Pacheco, Pat Patterson, Ron Skoneki, Madera Spenser, Chandler Taylor, Connie Thomas, Katherine Weidner, Frank Winkler, Sharon Carney Wright

*Please notify us when you are sick or hospitalized so that we might provide pastoral care.  
The prayer list will be updated monthly, please notify us if names need to remain longer.*

**Pastoral Care Team for December:** Betsy Cannon, Josie Eskridge, Mary-Nelms Parsons, Renee Taylor

### **Bazaar Updates**

Many thanks to everyone who made this year's Bazaar a success! All proceeds this year are going to the Boys and Girls Club of the River Region. All remaining items in the Treasure Attic are now half off. Pantry food items are still available. Feel free to visit and shop on the honors system.

### **Special Rector's Forum Dec. 14**

Join us on Sunday, December 14, at 9:15 a.m. in the Library for a special Rector's Forum addressing recent developments in global Anglicanism. You may have read about a statement from the Global Anglican Future Conference claiming to have "re-ordered the Anglican Communion," including rejecting the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury. What does this mean for the Episcopal Church? Our Rector will guide us through the context, share clear and gracious teaching, and offer honest personal reflections, all with respect for our Anglican brothers and sisters. All are welcome.

### **Living Well through Advent**

The Living Well through Advent Bible Study group will meet at the home of Marney Garzon Sunday evenings throughout the Advent season at 6 p.m. Booklets are available in the church office or on the St. John's website. For more information, please contact Carrie Shaw at [cgshaw2014@gmail.com](mailto:cgshaw2014@gmail.com).

### **Angel Tree Ministry**

Each Advent, St. John's adopts families who are in need of Christmas gifts for their children. We currently still have 9 families who need to be adopted, and this is such a wonderful tradition that can bring you and your family much joy. The Angel Tree information is setup in the Parish Hall or you may email [sarah@stjohnsmontgomery.org](mailto:sarah@stjohnsmontgomery.org), and all information can be emailed to you directly. All items must be delivered to HandsOn River Region no later than December 16.


### **Children's Christmas Pageant**

The St. John's Christmas Pageant is scheduled for Dec. 21 at 9:45 a.m. Come experience the pure joy of the Christmas story told by our children!

### **Christmas Eve/Christmas Day Services**

There will be three services on Christmas Eve: 5 p.m. (family-friendly service; bring a toy to donate to Mercy House), 7 p.m. (Festal Eucharist), and 10 p.m. (Holy Eucharist Rite 1). On Christmas Day we will meet at 10 a.m. to celebrate Christ's birth with Eucharist and carols.

### **Christmas Flower Donations**

If you would like to contribute money toward decorating the church for Christmas, you may do so by either writing a check to St. John's, or give online via this QR code:  If you would like to add in honorarium or memorial names, please email or call the church office. All memorial & honorarium names will be included in Christmas bulletins. Please submit names no later than December 19.

### STAY CONNECTED TO ST. JOHN'S

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### **Pledge Packets Out Now**

Pledge packets were mailed out during the month of October. If you didn't receive yours and would like to, you can either:

1. Email [churchoffice@stjohnsmontgomery.org](mailto:churchoffice@stjohnsmontgomery.org) and let us know so we can mail you one
  2. Call us at 334-262-1937 to request a packet
- or
3. Pick up a pledge packet in the church office, parish hall, or front of the sanctuary

All pledge materials are also available by visiting [stjohnsmontgomery.org/pages/2025-pledge-packets](http://stjohnsmontgomery.org/pages/2025-pledge-packets)

Many thanks for your continued generosity and dedication to St. John's!

### **Breeze System Gives Access to Directory, Calendar, & Giving**

St. John's has recently implemented a new system called Breeze for its giving, directory, calendar, website, and app. Parishioners received an invite via email to create an account. Information guides are printed and available in the church office or on the St. John's website. Please call the church office or email [emily@stjohnsmontgomery.org](mailto:emily@stjohnsmontgomery.org) for assistance. *Please note: Breeze is recommended for parishioners, but not required. Printed directories and giving statements are available upon request.*





## We're glad you are at St. John's today.

Whether you are visiting for the first time or attending regularly,  
you are a part of the St. John's family.

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Visitor Card



Visitors, please use this QR code to provide us with some information about you and your family so that we can better serve you.

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Visit our website to see service times, news from  
the parish, upcoming events,  
mission opportunities and more.

[stjohnsmontgomery.org](http://stjohnsmontgomery.org)



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Online Giving



If you wish to make a gift to St. John's,  
our online giving portal makes it easier than ever.

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