

ST. JOHN'S

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Third Sunday of Advent
Holy Eucharist: Rite II

December 14, 2025
10 a.m.

Welcome to St. John's



THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

*The Congregation joins in the portions printed in **bold italics**.*

As Advent is a season of quiet expectation and contemplation, it is traditional to omit organ preludes and postludes. The service will begin with the processional hymn.

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Book of Common Prayer (BCP) p. 355

And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

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.***

KYRIE, S91

Healey Willan

COLLECT OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever.

Amen.

THE LESSONS

All sit

Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, “Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.” Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the

wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God’s people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Psalm 146:4-9

Recite in unison

*Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! * whose hope is in the Lord their God;*

*Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; * who keeps his promise for ever;*

*Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, * and food to those who hunger.*

The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord

*opens the eyes of the blind; * the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;*

*The Lord loves the righteous; the Lord cares for the stranger; * he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.*

*The Lord shall reign for ever, * your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!*

James 5:7-10

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so

that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL AND ALLELUIA

All stand, as able

Al-le - lu-ia, Al - le - lu-ia, Al-le - lu-ia, Al-le - lu-ia.

5
Open our ears, O merciful God; Let us hear your sav - ing Word.
Repeat Alleluia as needed

Matthew 11:2-11

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see?

Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’

“Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

THE SERMON

The Nicene Creed

All stand, as able

BCP, p. 358

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.

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

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

For this community, the nation, and the world;
For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

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 Sara, Archbishop of Canterbury, Sean, Presiding Bishop; Justin, our Bishop; Bishops Retired; and for all bishops and other ministers;
For all who serve God in his Church.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

In the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for Episcopal Church of St. Mary, Bellevue, and St. Francis of Assisi Church, Bushnell.

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer we pray for the bishops and clergy of The Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil.

Hear us, Lord;
For your mercy is great.

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

life.

Heavenly Father, watch over and protect our nation's military members and their families, especially, ***Andrew, Brandon, Bryan, Caleb, Chase, Danielle, Eric, Geoffrey, Harry, Jack, Jay, John, Johnny, Kyle, Matthew B., Matthew M., Milton, Murray, Ricky, and Sarah.*** *Silence.*

We pray for our brothers and sisters who cannot be here with us today especially ***Frank.*** And for those on our weekly prayer list. *Silence*

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. *Silence*

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

God of peace and justice, we pray for all those who live under armed conflict in the Holy Land, Ukraine, Sudan, Iran and other places around the world. We pray for those with power over war or peace and those commanded to fight; for wisdom, compassion and restraint to guide their decisions. We pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear, that you would hold and protect them. In the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace. ***Amen.***

The celebrant adds a concluding collect.

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

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 Holy 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.

The Priest stands and says

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.

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Announcements

All sit

Birthday and Anniversary Prayer

THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Great Thanksgiving

(Eucharistic Prayer C)

BCP, p. 369

At the Offertory, Anthem

“Prepare the Way of the Lord”

William Rowan

Presentation Hymn ,

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”
(We will sing stanza #3 only)

Tune: VENI , VENI EMMANUEL

O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes on Sinai’s height in ancient times did give the law, in cloud and majesty and awe. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

All things come of Thee, O Lord.

And of Thine own have we given Thee.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.

Glory to you for ever and ever.

At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.

By your will they were created and have their being.

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.

Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.

Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.

By his blood, he reconciled us.

Sanctus and Benedictus, S-129

Please kneel, as able

And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, 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, gave thanks, 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."

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,
We celebrate his death and resurrection, as we await the day of his coming.

Lord God of our Fathers: God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and

By his wounds, we are healed.

And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

Setting: Robert Powell

not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.

Accept these prayers and praises, Father, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation. ***AMEN.***

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

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 Breaking of the Bread

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast, Alleluia!

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 Holy Eucharist is Christ's eternal banquet, to which all adults and children are invited. If you are a baptized Christian of any tradition (and regardless of your current status in any other church) we welcome you to receive communion with this community of God's people. At the time of communion, the ushers will indicate when your row should come forward. Please come to the altar rail; you may stand or kneel. The bread will be placed in your outstretched hands; the appropriate response is "Amen." When the chalice of wine comes, hold out your bread for the minister to dip it in the wine for you, or decline it by crossing your arms over your chest. If for any reason you prefer not to receive the bread and wine, or if you have not been Baptized, you may come forward and cross your arms over your chest for a blessing.

At the Distribution,

Voluntary

Anthem,

"The Desert Shall Rejoice"

Gracia Grindal

The Post-Communion Prayer

All kneel, as able

BCP, p.366

Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

The Blessing

Hymn 65,

"Prepare the Way, O Zion"

Tune: BERDAN VAG FOR HERRAN

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

Thanks be to God!



THIS MORNING'S MUSIC

We are grateful to have Jennifer Lester here to play for us this morning while Sylvia is away!

On the third Sunday of Advent, the music is meant to reflect joyful anticipation as well as thoughtful preparation. The processional hymn, "Hark, the Glad Sound" makes the same promises as today's

readings in the Psalms and the book of James, proclaiming that the coming of the Lord is near. The hymn's text was written by English Nonconformist minister Philip Doddridge (1702-1751) and is thought to be inspired by Alexander Pope's poem "Messiah", which extends the imagery of Christ's coming to encompass the triumphal entry and his return in glory.

The offertory anthem, "Prepare the Way of the Lord", written by contemporary organist and composer William Rowan (b. 1951), alludes to Christ's words about John the Baptist in this morning's Gospel reading in Matthew ("See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you") but is applicable to all of us as we await forgiveness and justice. We repeat the call to ready ourselves for the arrival of the Messiah in the recessional hymn, "Prepare the Way, O Zion". The words of the hymn were written by Swedish poet Franz Mikael Franzén (1772-1847), translated to English by Episcopal priest Charles P. Price (1920-1999), and set to a Swedish variant of a German dance tune. The lively melody is a fitting accompaniment to the excitement and exhortation in the text.

The communion anthem, "The Desert Shall Rejoice", is a paraphrase of the Old Testament reading in Isaiah 35, declaring that "the desert shall rejoice...the ears of the deaf will hear... the tongue of the mute shall sing, and the lame will dance with gladness".



VISITORS AND GUESTS: Welcome to St. John's! We hope you will stay after the service for an opportunity to chat. Snacks and beverages are provided in our Parish Hall. If you have questions about baptisms, weddings, membership, or to be included on our newsletter and mailing lists please email the Church Office at office@stjohnsmlb.org.

THE ALTAR FLOWERS AND SANCTUARY CANDLE may be given in memory of a loved one, or to commemorate some occasion. Contact the church office at office@stjohnsmlb.org or 321-254-3365.

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK: Bailey Oas, Anson Stitzel, Edie Bennett.

ANNIVERSARIES THIS WEEK: Robert & Franny Boersma, Paul & Lorraine Burleson, Eric & Charlene Turner.

NEW BIBLE STUDY: "Read the Bible in a Year", every Wednesday, at 10:00 a.m. in the Rector's office.

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve Festival Worship

Wednesday, Dec. 24, 8 p.m. Carols,
7:45 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship, Rite I, with music.

Thursday, Dec. 25, 9 a.m.

Lessons and Carols

Sunday, Dec. 28, 10 a.m.

ADULT & YOUTH CHRISTIAN FORMATION: 9:00 a.m.
Adults in the Parish Hall, Youth in the Chapel.

TGIF: Join the Men's Bible study, Fridays, 8 a.m.
at La Loma Coney Island, 1180 Aurora Rd,
Melbourne, 32935. 321-254-8559.

PLEASE WELCOME JEN LESTER as our organist
today while Sylvia is away.

A PRAYER REQUEST BOX is available from the St.

John's Order of the Daughters of the King in the Sanctuary beside the Daughters' banner. Alternatively, you may contact Sarah Kendall, (702) 203-6093, 537sarah@gmail.com, or any Daughter. We have taken a vow to pray for others and we take this vow seriously. All prayer requests are strictly confidential, and we, as Daughters, honor that confidentiality. Prayers will be passed on to Fr. Timothy if requested.

DONATE TO ST. JOHN'S ONLINE! You can now make a safe and convenient donation to St. John's via PayPal. Scan the QR code at right or visit stjohnsmlb.org and click on Donate Now!



MILITARY MEMBERS: Help keep our military personnel up-to-date on the Prayers of the People. Email Jackie Bond before the end of the year if a member now on the list is still active, or if you have a new one to add; and let us know your relationship to the active member. We will remove all others starting in January.

WHOLENESS TO FREEDOM FOOD PANTRY: Remember to bring non-perishable foods for the

food pantry. Place food in the basket at the back of the church or you may leave donations in the Parish Hall or the office. Many thanks for your generous support **St. John's Focus** for the month of December has been designated for the two families in foreign missions supported by The Episcopal Diocese of Central Florida. Outreach offerings for the month of December will be divided between the Dass and Fox families.

Serving in San Paolo, Brazil are the Rev. Steven and Mary Dass, ministering among homeless children and adults in the 'red light district' of Sao Paulo Brazil. This is not funded through the Diocesan budget. You can learn more about them on their blog at spmercyministry.com.

Serving in support of other missionaries are the Rev. Loren and Linda Fox. The Foxes live in northern Thailand, Linda coordinates member care for missionaries while Fr. Loren coordinates strategy and leadership development focused on planting churches among seven unreached peoples who currently live outside the reach of the Church. To learn more email: ReachUs@EngagingTheAdventure.org.

THANKS TO ALL WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN OUR 2026 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

If you have not submitted a completed 2026 pledge card, it is still not too late. Pledge cards are available in the church or by contacting the church office. You can also pledge online by going to our website "stjohnsmlb.org" and clicking on "stewardship."

As we outline our plans under the leadership of Father Timothy for the upcoming year, the Vestry will rely on your stewardship response in approving a realistic and responsible budget.

Some parishioners prefer to use weekly pledge envelopes in their weekly giving; some don't use the envelopes. If you need envelopes, contact the church office or see Jack Kenworthy or Katie Wilson.



You are invited to join a community of women who believe in the power of prayer, service to others, and the sharing of the gospel to expand the Kingdom of God. You can find out more about the DOK by contacting Sallie Razor at 859-585-5836, srazor@bellsouth.net; or Pam Davis, at 321-480-9283, SunHatPam@hotmail.com.

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY: Isaiah 7:10-16, Romans 1:1-7, Matthew 1:18-25, Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18.
 To find all the lessons visit the webpage: lectionarypage.net and click on the date.

SUNDAY MINISTRIES SCHEDULE:

	December 14 10:00 a.m.	December 21 10:00 a.m.	December 24 Christmas Eve Carols: 7:45 p.m.; Service: 8:00 p.m.	December 25 Christmas Day 9:00 a.m.
Greeters	A. Weeks B. Rincones	A. Weeks J. Miller	TBD	R. Huffman
Ushers	J. Bond L. Miller	A. & J. Lacy	B. & T. Chernault J. Bond L. Miller	R. Huffman
Chalice Bearer	M. Salmon	J. Bond	K. Oas	Beowulf
Acolytes	Asher & Beowulf	Asher & Beowulf	Asher & Beowulf	Asher
Altar Guild	M. Salmon	L. Bennett	K. Oas	K. Oas
Counter	K. Wilson	K. Wilson	N/A	N/A
A/V	B. Kendall V. Mitz	B. Kendall V. Mitz	B. Kendall V. Mitz	B. Kendall V. Mitz

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

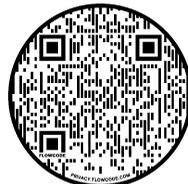
- Sun (12/14) Christian Formation, 9:00 a.m. Adults, Parish Hall; Youth, Chapel.
Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10 a.m., also Livestreamed.
- Mon (12/15) AA, 5:30 p.m., Parish Hall.
- Tues (12/16) Boy Scouts, 5:30 p.m., Parish Hall.
- Wed (12/17) Bible in a Year Study Group, 10 a.m., Rector's office.
Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m. Choir Loft.
- Thurs (12/18) Staff Meeting, 9 a.m., Rector's office.
Ladies AA, 6:30 p.m., Parish Hall.
Vestry Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Chapel.
- Fri (12/19) TGIF, Men's Bible Study, 8 a.m. La Loma Coney Island Restaurant, 1180 Aurora.
- Sun (12/21) Christian Formation, 9:00 a.m., Adults, Parish Hall; Youth, Chapel.
Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10:00 a.m., also Livestreamed.

All Zoom and Livestream links are available by visiting stjohnsmlb.org > Calendar, then clicking on the event. Or you may email office@stjohnsmlb.org and we will send you the link.

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

*... is a worshipping community, obedient to scripture,
growing as servants of Christ, and sharing His love in word and deed.*

610 Young Street ✕ Melbourne, FL 32935 ✕ 321-254-3365 ✕ www.stjohnsmlb.org
Parish Office email: office@stjohnsmlb.org



The Rev. Timothy Rutherford, Rector
Pastoral Care: 803-565-6750 (Call or Text)
rector@stjohnsmlb.org

Sylvia Tammen, Music Minister
sylvia.tammen1@gmail.com

Jackie Bond, Office Assistant
office@stjohnsmlb.org

Carole Taylor, Bookkeeper
ctaylor9797@yahoo.com

The Vestry of St. John's Church
Kathy Oas, Sr. Warden
Paul Mitz, Jr. Warden
Keith Salmon, Treasurer
Amy Lacy, Secretary

Serving thru 1/2025
Jackie Bond, Kathy Oas, Katie Wilson

Serving thru 1/2026
Jack Kenworthy, Amy Lacy, Julie Miller

Serving thru 1/2027
Peter Fischel, Ben Kendall