

ST. JOHN'S

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Fourth Sunday of Advent
Holy Eucharist: Rite II

December 21, 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.

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

THE LESSONS

All sit

Isaiah 7:10-16

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name

him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

Recite in unison

*Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.*

*In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
stir up your strength and come to help us.*

*Restore us, O God of hosts; **

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

*O Lord God of hosts, *
how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?*

*You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.*

*You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.*

*Restore us, O God of hosts; **

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

*Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.*

*And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.*

*Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.*

Romans 1:1-7

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and

apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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 saving Word.
Repeat Alleluia as needed

Matthew 1:18-25

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

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his

people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

All kneel, as able

Form I, BCP, p. 383

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord, saying “Lord, have mercy.”

For the peace from above, for the loving-kindness of God, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the Holy Church of God, and for the unity of all peoples.

In the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer, we pray for St. Matthias Episcopal Church, Clermont, and St. Mark’s Church, Cocoa.

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, we pray for the bishops and clergy of The Anglican Church of Burundi.

For Sarah, Archbishop of Canterbury, Sean, Presiding Bishop, for Justin, our Bishop, and for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For Donald, our President, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority.

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.**

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For seasonable weather, and for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray

to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who travel on land, on water, in the air or through outer space, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering.

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*

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, and for all the departed, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That we may end our lives in faith and hope, without suffering and without reproach, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Defend us, deliver us, and in thy compassion protect us, O Lord, by thy grace.

Lord, have mercy.

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,

Hymn 265

“The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came”

Tune: GABRIEL’S MESSAGE

Presentation Hymn ,

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

Tune: VENI, VENI EMMANUEL

(We will sing stanza #4 only)

O Come, thou Branch of Jesse’s tree, free them from Satan’s tyranny that trust thy mighty power to save, and give them victory o’er the grave. 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.

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:

Sanctus and Benedictus, S-129

Setting: Robert Powell

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 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," hold out your bread for the minister to dip it in the wine for you, or you may take wine from the common cup held by the chalice bearer. 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

Mary, Did You Know?

Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene
arr. Kevin Olson

Hymn 54,

"Savior of the Nations, Come!"

Tune: NUN KOMM, DER
HEIDEN HEILAND

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 66,

"Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"

Tune: STUTTGART

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

Thanks be to God!



THIS MORNING'S MUSIC

This morning's opening hymn, "Watchman, Tell Us Of The Night", takes its title from Isaiah 21:11-12, in which a vigilant watchman admonishes Israel to look to God's providence in times of uncertainty and darkness. The author of the hymn - poet, polyglot, and diplomat Sir John Bowring (1792-1872) - lived through plenty of uncertainty and darkness, but rather than despair, he responded to adversity with a hopeful Advent poem that blends the symbolism of the watchman in Isaiah with the symbolism of the star in Matthew. His words are paired with Joseph Parry's (1841-1903) Welsh hymn melody "Aberystwyth", which is also commonly associated with the Charles Wesley hymn "Jesus, Lover of My Soul".

The offertory anthem, "The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came" is an English paraphrase of the Basque carol "Gabriel's Message", translated by Anglican priest and novelist Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924) and harmonized by Anglican organist and choral conductor Edgar Pettman (1865-1943). The carol poetically depicts the dialogue between the Angel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary in the Annunciation, making it an appropriate accompaniment for this morning's reading in Matthew about the conception and birth of Christ.

The communion voluntary is a solo piano arrangement of the contemporary classic "Mary, Did You Know", which is similar to "Gabriel's Message" in that it explores the implications of the Incarnation from Mary's point of view. With words by Mark Lowry and music by Buddy Greene, it poses a series of questions that point to the significance both of Christ's arrival and his ministry. While many of the song's descriptions of Christ's miracles ("The blind will see, the deaf will hear/ The dead will live again/ The lame will leap, the dumb will speak/The praises of the Lamb") are more directly related to readings for the third Sunday in Advent than the fourth, its overall focus on Christ's birth is consistent with today's passages in both Isaiah and Matthew.

The communion hymn, "Savior, of the Nations Come" has a long history. The original Latin text, "Veni, Redemptor gentium" was ascribed to the church father Ambrose of Milan (340-397) and adapted into German by Martin Luther (1483-1546) - and then to English by William M. Reynolds (1812-1872) and James Waring McCrady (b. 1938). The hymn is essentially a reaffirmation of the clauses of the Nicene Creed that reference the incarnation. Its melody was derived from medieval plainchant and served as the basis for several Baroque chorales and organ pieces.

Our closing hymn, "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus", was originally published in Charles Wesley's popular collection Hymns for the Nativity of our Lord, but with its evocative call for Christ to come and enumeration of the roles he would fill, it is now frequently considered an Advent hymn rather than a Christmas hymn. By skillfully weaving together promises from the Old Testament and New Testament with personal petitions for release from our "fears and sins", Wesley created a text

that resonates on both a communal and individual level.



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: Sharon Tuten.

ANNIVERSARIES THIS WEEK: Hasty & Julie Miller, Randy & Eloise Evans.

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.

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

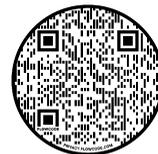
A PRAYER REQUEST BOX is available from the St. John's Order of the Daughters of the King in the

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.

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.

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.

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!



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.

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.” 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 61:10-62:3, Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7, John 1:1-18, Psalm 147. To find all the lessons visit the webpage: lectionarypage.net and click on the date.

SUNDAY MINISTRIES SCHEDULE:

	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.	December 28 10:00 a.m.
Greeters	A. Weeks J. Miller	TBD	R. Huffman	A. Weeks
Ushers	A. & J. Lacy	B. & T. Chernault J. Bond & L. Miller	R. Huffman	A. & J. Lacy
Chalice Bearer	J. Bond	K. Oas	TBD	J. Bond
Acolytes	Asher & Beowulf	Asher & Beowulf	N/A	Asher & Beowulf
Altar Guild	L. Bennett	K. Oas	K. Oas	L. Bennett
Counter	K. Wilson	N/A	N/A	K. Wilson
A/V	B. Kendall, V. Mitz	B. Kendall, V. Mitz	B. Kendall, V. Mitz	B. Kendall, V. Mitz

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

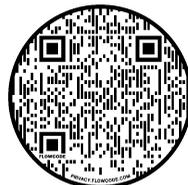
- Sun (12/21) Christian Formation, 9:00 a.m. Adults, Parish Hall; Youth, Chapel.
Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10 a.m., also livestreamed.
Young Peoples AA, 4:00 p.m., Parish Hall.
- Mon (12/22) AA, 5:30 p.m., Parish Hall.
- Tues (12/23) Boy Scouts, 5:30 p.m., Parish Hall.
- Wed (12/24) Bible in a Year Study Group, 10 a.m., Rector's office.
Christmas Eve Worship, 8 p.m., in the Sanctuary, In-person and livestream..
Carols, 7:45 p.m.
- Thurs (12/25) Christmas Worship, Rite I, In-Person and livestream, 9 a.m.
- Fri (12/26) TGIF, Men's Bible Study, 8 a.m. La Loma Coney Island Restaurant, 1180 Aurora.
- Sun (12/28) Christian Formation, 9:00 a.m., Adults, Parish Hall; Youth, Chapel.
Festival of Lessons and Carols, 10:00 a.m., also Livestreamed.
AA Business Meeting, 3:00 p.m., Parish Hall.

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