

Rejoice in the Lord always;  
again I will say, Rejoice!

Phillipians 4:4

Episcopal Church of the Epiphany  
Third Sunday of Advent  
Gaudete Sunday  
December 16, 2012, 9:30 am

We worship during Advent according to the Holy Eucharist: Rite Two,  
beginning on page 355 of the Book of Common Prayer.

### The Liturgy of the Word

Processional Hymn: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*.....56  
Verses 1, 2, 5, & 8

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

**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.**

Hymn of Praise: *First Song of Isaiah*.....SH-18

Advent Wreath Observance (*the people continue standing*)

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

*Lighting of the first, second, and third (rose) Advent candles  
in silence*

**Heavenly Father, help us to remember that you are  
always with us. Cleanse our hearts of all thoughts  
and desires that keep us from loving you and our  
neighbor and fill us with your love that we may be  
prepared to receive your Son when he comes, who  
lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, for  
ever and ever. Amen.**

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 (the people sit)

The First Lesson – Zephaniah 3:14-20

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;  
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,  
O daughter Jerusalem!

The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,  
he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;  
you shall fear disaster no more.

On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

Do not fear, O Zion;

do not let your hands grow weak.

The LORD, your God, is in your midst,

a warrior who gives victory;  
he will rejoice over you with gladness,  
he will renew you in his love;  
he will exult over you with loud singing  
as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,  
so that you will not bear reproach for it.  
I will deal with all your oppressors  
at that time.

And I will save the lame  
and gather the outcast,  
and I will change their shame into praise  
and renown in all the earth.

At that time I will bring you home,  
at the time when I gather you;  
for I will make you renowned and praised  
among all the peoples of the earth,  
when I restore your fortunes  
before your eyes, says the LORD.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

The Canticle – Canticle 9, Page 86 BCP  
The First Song of Isaiah, Isaiah 12:2-6

Surely, it is God who saves me; \*

**I will trust in him and not be afraid.**

For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, \*  
**and he will be my Savior.**

Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing \*  
**from the springs of salvation.**

And on that day you shall say, \*

**Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name;**

Make his deeds known among the peoples; \*

**see that they remember that his Name is  
exalted.**

Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, \*  
**and this is known in all the world.**

Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, \*

**for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy  
One of Israel.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: \*  
**as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for  
ever. Amen.**

The Epistle – Phillipians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your  
gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not  
worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and  
supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made  
known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all  
understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in  
Christ Jesus.

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

The Gospel Sequence – Luke 3:7-18 (the people stand)

Hymn: *Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers*.....68  
Verses 1-2

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.  
**Glory to You, Lord Christ.**

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin 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."

And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to You, Lord Christ.**

Hymn: *Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers*.....68  
Verse 3

Sermon

The Nicene Creed (*the people stand*)

**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.**

The Prayers of the People (Form III, page 387 of the Book of Common Prayer)

Father, we pray for Church of the Messiah, Heflin; for Grace Church, Sheffield; for our companion diocese of Haiti and its bishop, Zaché; for the Diocesan Department of Finance; for the Diocesan Disciplinary Board; and for your holy Catholic Church;

**That we all may be one.**

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;

**That your Name may be glorified by all people.**

We pray for Katharine, our presiding bishop, for Kee and Santosh, our bishops, for Arnold, our priest, and for all bishops, priests, and deacons;

**That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.**

We pray for Barack, our President; for Robert, our governor; for Bobby, our mayor; and for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;

**That there may be justice and peace on the earth.**

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;

**That our works may find favor in your sight.**

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble.

**That they may be delivered from their distress.**

Give to the departed eternal rest.

**Let light perpetual shine upon them.**

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;

**May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.**

Let us pray for **Lynda** Denton, **Dot** Harris, **Alice** Williams, **Lannon** Poole, **Dawn** Jones (Jere and Pam VanEtten), **Amber**, **Jared** and **Dezsel** Oliver (Kathy Haynie), **Brandon** Boland (Cathy Jones), **Bobby** Borden (Amanda Borden), **Chris** Eady (Lynne Eady), **Lisa** Wallace (Laura Williams), **Leni** Young (Pat Jordan), **Jenna** Moates (Kelli Kerr), **Wilson** Owen Weaver – Thanksgiving (Jere and Pam Van Etten), **John** Myer (Ann Easley, John and Kathy Haynie), **Chelsea** Baker (Ann Easley), **Ed** Clayton (Jean Kerr), **Billie** Wilkinson, **Lindsey** Burt (Eddie and Pam Harper), **Jimmie** Cantrell (Al Cantrell), and the others we now name: (*the people here add their own petitions*). Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

*The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.*

## Confession of Sin (the people stand or kneel)

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

**Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

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.**

## Joys and Concerns of the Congregation

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## The Holy Communion

Offertory Hymn: *Soon and Very Soon*

**1. Soon and very soon,  
We are going to see the King;  
Soon and very soon,  
We are going to see the King;  
Soon and very soon,  
We are going to see the King;  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!  
We're going to see the King.**

**2. No more crying there, . . .  
3. No more dying there, . . .**

## The Presentation

**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

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.**

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 for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

*The people sing (found in the Hymnal at S 129)*

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

*The people stand or kneel*

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,

**We remember his death,  
We proclaim his resurrection,  
We await his coming in glory;**

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, with 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 for ever. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior  
Christ has 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 Breaking of the Bread

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.*

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

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 ministers receive the Sacrament in both kinds, and then immediately deliver it to the people.*

Communion Hymn: *In His Time*.....SH-3

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*After Communion, the people stand or kneel and the Celebrant says*

Let us pray.

**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

Recessional Hymn (*the people stand*)

*Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*.....376

Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

We light the rose candle in the Advent wreath on this third Sunday of Advent to symbolize the joy we have in the blessed hope that God is coming to us. The word “Gaudete” means “rejoice.”

Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of this week (December 12-14) are the traditional winter Ember days. It is Anglican tradition to use these three days for fasting and prayer.

What should our Sunday schedule look like? What should we be trying to accomplish on Sunday mornings? The vestry (John Haynie, Jere Van Etten, Jimmy Weldon, Laura Williams, Ann Easley, and Amanda Borden) is reflecting on this now. Please let one of the Vestry members know of your preferences!

***Serving at Epiphany this week***

Ushers: Jere and Pam Van Etten  
Altar Guild: Jean Kerr  
Lay Reader: Mike Edwards

Chalice Bearer: John Haynie  
Refreshments: Ann Easley  
Stewards: Maurice and Debra McCord

***And next***

Ushers: Lee & Amanda Borden  
Altar Guild: Cathy Jones  
Lay Reader: Nancy Dupree

Chalice Bearer: Laura Williams  
Refreshments: Al Cantrell  
Stewards: Jere & Pam Van Etten