

**The Holy Eucharist, Rite II  
December 21, 2025 - The Fourth Sunday of Advent  
St. James Episcopal Church, Woodstock, VT  
10:00 am**

**The Word of God**

Prelude

Dr. James E. Lorenz, Director of Music

**Hymn 56 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

*Veni, veni, Emmanuel*

**1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile  
Here until the Son of God appear.**

**2 O Come, thou Wisdom from on high,  
Who orderest all things mightily;  
To us the path of knowledge  
Show, and teach us in her ways to go.**

**3 O come, O come, thou Lord on  
might,  
Who to thy tribes on Sinai's height  
In Ancient times didst give the law,  
In cloud, and majesty, and awe.**

**4 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.**

**5 O come, thou Key of David,  
Come, and open wide our heavenly  
home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high,  
And close the path to misery.**

**6 O come, thou Dayspring from on  
high,  
And cheer us by thy drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadow put to flight.**

**7 O come, Desire of nations,  
Bind in one the hearts of all mankind;  
Bid thou our sad divisions cease,  
And be thyself our King of Peace.**

**8 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear.**

*The people standing, the Celebrant says*

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

**People:** And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

*The Celebrant may say*

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 Eleison (S96, *The Hymnal* 1982)**

**Lord, have mercy.**

**Christ have mercy.**

**Lord have mercy.**

**The Collect of The Day**

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Celebrant: 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.

**People: Amen.**

**The First Lesson: 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."

**Psalms 80:1-7, 16-18 (BCP, page 702)**

- 1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; \*  
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
- 2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, \*  
stir up your strength and come to help us.
- 3 Restore us, O God of hosts; \*

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

- 4 O LORD God of hosts, \*  
how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?
- 5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; \*  
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- 6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, \*  
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- 7 Restore us, O God of hosts; \*  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 16 Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, \*  
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.
- 17 And so will we never turn away from you; \*  
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.
- 18 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; \*  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

### **The Second Lesson: 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.

**Sequence Hymn 265 The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came**

*Gabriel's Message*

**1. The angel Gabriel from heaven came,  
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;**

**"All hail," said he, "thou lowly maiden Mary,  
most highly favored lady," Gloria!**

**2. "For know a blessed Mother thou shalt be,  
all generations laud and honor thee,  
thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,  
most highly favored lady," Gloria!**

**3. Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,  
"To me be as it pleaseth God," she said,  
"my soul shall laud and magnify his holy Name."  
Most highly favored lady, Gloria!**

**4. Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born  
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,  
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say—  
"Most highly favored lady," Gloria!**

**The Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25**

*Then, all standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads the Gospel, first saying*

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

**People: 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.*

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

## **The Sermon: The Rev. Amy Spagna**

### **The Nicene Creed (BCP, page 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.

### **The Prayers of the People, Form IV (BCP, page 388)**

*Deacon or other leader*

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy

***Hear our prayer.***

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy

***Hear our prayer.***

Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy

***Hear our prayer.***

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy

***Hear our prayer.***

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy

***Hear our prayer.***

We commend to your mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and we pray that we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom.

*Silence*

Lord, in your mercy

***Hear our prayer.***

*The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.*

## Confession of Sin (BCP, page 360)

*The Deacon or Celebrant says*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Silence may be kept.*

*Minister and **People***

**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.**

*The Bishop when present, or 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**

**(BCP, page 360)**

*All stand.*

**Celebrant:** The peace of the Lord be always with you.

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

**The Holy Communion**

**Offertory Hymn 55 Redeemer of the Nations, Come**

*Veni Redemptor genitum*

**1 Redeemer of the nations, come;  
Reveal yourself in virgin birth,**

**The birth which ages all adore,  
A wondrous birth, befitting God.**

**2 From human will you do not spring,  
But from the Spirit of our God;  
O Word of God, come; take our flesh  
And grow as child in Mary's womb.**

**3 You came forth from the eternal God,  
And you returned to that same source.  
You suffered death and harrowed hell,  
And reigned once more from God's high throne.**

**4 With God the Father you are one,  
And one with us in human flesh.  
Of fill our weak and dying frame  
With godly strength which never fails.**

**5 Your cradle shines with glory's light;  
Its splendor pierces all our gloom.  
Our faith reflects those radiant beams;  
No night shall overcome it now.**

**6 All praise, O unbegotten God,  
All praise to you, eternal Word,  
All praise, life giving Spirit, praise,  
All glory to our God Triune.**

**The Doxology: Hymn 380, vs. 3 (*Old 100<sup>th</sup>*)**

**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: Eucharistic Prayer A (BCP, page 361)**

*The People remain standing.*

**Celebrant:** The Lord be with you.

**People:** And also with you.

**Celebrant:** Lift up your hearts.

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

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

**People:** It is right to give our thanks and praise.



*Facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds*

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and every- where to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord; 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:

**Sanctus (S130, *The Hymnal 1982*)**

**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.*

*Then the Celebrant continues*

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

*At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.*

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, 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 we proclaim the mystery of faith:

*Celebrant and People*

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

*The Celebrant continues*

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. 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,

*People and Celebrant*

**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.**

**The Breaking of the Bread**

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.*

Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

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

*Celebrant:*

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.

*Those unable to receive communion in person today are invited to say the following Prayer of Spiritual Communion.*

*In union, blessed Jesus, with the faithful gathered at every altar of your Church where your blessed Body and Blood are offered this day, and remembering particularly my own parish and those worshiping there, I long to offer you praise and thanksgiving, for creation and all the blessings of this life, for the redemption won for us by your life, death, and resurrection, for the means of grace and the hope of glory.*

*And particularly for the blessings given me.... I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament, and, since I cannot at this time receive communion, I pray you to come into my heart. I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart, my soul, and my mind. Let nothing separate me from you; let me serve you in this life until, by your grace, I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace. Amen.*

**Post-communion Prayer (BCP, page 366)**

*Celebrant:* Let us pray.

*Celebrant and People*

**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 Bishop when present, or the Priest, may bless the people.*

**Hymn 66 Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus**

*Stuttgart*

**1 Come, thou long-expected Jesus  
born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us,  
let us find our rest in thee.**

**2 Israel's strength and consolation,  
hope of all the earth thou art:  
dear desire of every nation,  
joy of every longing heart.**

**3 Born thy people to deliver,  
born a child, and yet a king,  
born to reign in us for ever,  
now thy gracious kingdom bring.**

**4 By thine own eternal Spirit  
rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all-sufficient merit,  
raise us to thy glorious throne.**

**Dismissal**

**BCP, page 366**

**Celebrant:** Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**People:** Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Dr. James E. Lorenz, Director of Music