

**The Holy Eucharist, Rite II
December 14, 2025 - The Second 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 59 Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding

Merton

**1 Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding.
"Christ is nigh," it seems to say;
"Cast away the works of darkness,
O ye children of the day."**

**2 Wakened by the solemn warning,
from earth's bondage let us rise;
Christ, our sun, all sloth dispelling,
shines upon the morning skies.**

**3 Lo! the Lamb, so long expected,
comes with pardon down from heaven;
let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
one and all to be forgiven;**

**4 so when next he comes with glory,
and the world is wrapped in fear,
may he with his mercy shield us,
and with words of love draw near.**

**5 Honor, glory, might, and blessing
to the Father and the Son,
with the everlasting Spirit,
while unending ages run.**

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.

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.

People: Amen.

The First Lesson: 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 (BCP, page 803)

- 4 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! *
whose hope is in the LORD their God;
- 5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; *
who keeps his promise for ever;
- 6 Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, *
and food to those who hunger.
- 7 The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind; *
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
- 8 The LORD loves the righteous; the LORD cares for the stranger; *
he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

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

The Second Lesson: 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.

Sequence Hymn 76 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

Winchester New

**1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings.**

**2 Then cleansed be every breast from sin;
make straight the way for God within,
and let each heart prepare a home
where such a mighty guest may come.**

**3 For thou art our salvation, Lord,
our refuge, and our great reward;
without thy grace we waste away
like flowers that wither and decay.**

**4 To heal the sick stretch out thine hand,
and bid the fallen sinner stand;
shine forth, and let thy light restore
earth's own true loveliness once more.**

**5 All praise, eternal Son, to thee,
whose advent doth thy people free;
whom with the Father we adore
and Holy Spirit evermore.**

The Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

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.

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.

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 III (BCP, page 387)

The Leader and People pray responsively

Father, we pray 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 all bishops, priests, and deacons;
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray 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 our own needs and those of others.

Silence

The People may add their own petitions.

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 Anthem

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 68 Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers

Llangloffan

1 Rejoice! rejoice, believers,
and let your lights appear!
The evening is advancing,
and darker night is near.
The Bridegroom is arising,
and soon he will draw nigh;
up, watch with expectation!
at the midnight comes the cry.

2 See that your lamps are burning,
replenish them with oil;
look now for your salvation,
the end of sin and toil.
The marriage-feast is waiting,
the gates wide open stand;
rise up, ye heirs of glory,
the Bridegroom is at hand!

3 Our hope and expectation,
O Jesus, now appear;
arise, thou Sun so longed for,
above this darkened sphere!
With hearts and hands uplifted,
we plead, O Lord, to see
the day of earth's redemption,
and ever be with thee!

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