

# The Fourth Sunday of Advent

**December 18, 2011**



**St. Stephen's Episcopal Church**  
1512 Willow  
Blytheville AR 72315

**Rt. Rev. Larry Benfield, Bishop Arkansas**  
**Rev. Fr. John Scott Trotter**

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# A Penitential Order

*The people stand as they are able.*

## **Opening Hymn**

The Hymnal 1982 #436 - Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates

## **Opening Acclamation**

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

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

*The people kneel as they are able.*

## **The Summary of the Law**

Jesus said, "The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:29-31

## **Penitential Sentence**

*The Presider then says*

Jesus said, "The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these." *Mark 12:29-31*

*A period of silence is kept.*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*All say together*

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.

Lord, have mercy.  
*Christ, have mercy.*  
Lord, have mercy.

### **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. *Amen.*

*A period of silence is kept.*

## The Word of God

### **First Reading**

A reading from The Second Book of Samuel.

<sup>1</sup> Now when the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup> the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” <sup>3</sup> Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you.” <sup>4</sup> But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup> Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup> I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. <sup>7</sup> Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” <sup>8</sup> Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup> and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup> And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup> from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. <sup>16</sup> Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

The Word of the Lord

People

Thanks be to God

*A period of silence is kept.*

The Song of Mary

**Canticle 3**

*BCP p. 50*

Luke 1:46-55

Canticle 3

The Song of Mary

*Magnificat*

My soul doth magnify the Lord, \*  
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

For he hath regarded \*  
the lowliness of his handmaiden.

For behold from henceforth \*  
all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath magnified me, \*  
and holy is his Name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him \*  
throughout all generations.

He hath showed strength with his arm; \*  
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat, \*  
and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things, \*  
and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel, \*  
as he promised to our forefathers,  
Abraham and his seed for ever.

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.

**Second Reading**

A reading from The Letter of Paul to the Romans.

<sup>25</sup> Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel  
and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the  
mystery that was kept secret for long ages <sup>26</sup> but is now disclosed, and  
through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles,  
according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the

obedience of faith—<sup>27</sup> to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

The Word of the Lord  
People  
Thanks be to God

*A period of silence is kept.*

*The people stand as they are able.*

## **Sequence Hymn**

The Hymnal 1982 #544 - Jesus shall reign where e'er the sun

## **Gospel**

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

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup> The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also

conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God.” <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord  
People  
Praise to you, Lord Christ

*A period of silence is kept.*

## **Sermon**

*The people stand as they are able.*

## **The Nicene Creed**

*All say together*

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**

### **Intercessor**

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, let us pray to the Lord. *Lord, have  
mercy.*

For our Bishop, and for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the  
Lord. *Lord, have mercy.*

For our President, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in  
authority, let us pray to the Lord. *Lord, have mercy.*

For this city (town, village, \_\_\_\_\_), for every city and  
community, and for those who live in them, 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, or 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, let us pray to the Lord. *Lord, have mercy.*

For \_\_\_\_\_, 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.*

For the absolution and remission of our sins and offenses, 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.*

In the communion of [ \_\_\_\_\_ and of all the] saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life, to Christ our God. *To thee, O Lord our God.*

*A period of silence is kept.*

## **Collect**

Lord, hear the prayers of your people; and what we have asked faithfully, grant that we may obtain effectually, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## **The Peace**

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

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

*The Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

## **The Holy Communion**

*A period of silence is kept.*

*The Priest says*

Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and make good your vows to the Most High. *Psalm 50:14*

## **Offertory Hymn**

### **The Hymnal 1982 # 380, vs 3**

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**

**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 him thanks and praise.*

*Celebrant*

It is truly right, and good and joyful, to give you thanks, all-holy God, source of life and fountain of mercy.

You have filled us and all creation with your blessing and fed us with your constant love; you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ and knit us into one body. Through your Spirit you replenish us and call us to fullness of life.

Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation, we lift our voices with all creation as we sing (say):

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 Celebrant continues*

Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace.

But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love. Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people.

Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation. Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he

triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

On the night before he died for us, Our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, 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.”

As supper was ending, Jesus 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 poured out for you and for all 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*

Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ’s Body in the world. Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and sons, that with [ \_\_\_\_\_ and] all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. AMEN

*The People respond Amen.*

## **Lord's Prayer**

**Celebrant** As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

## ***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,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

### **The Breaking of the Bread**

*A period of silence is kept.*

### **The Breaking of the Bread**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

*The Priest invites the people to Communion*

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.

### **Communion Hymn**

The Hymnal 1982 #707 - Take my life, and let it be

*The people stand as they are able.*

### **Postcommunion Prayer**

God of abundance,  
you have fed us  
with the bread of life

and cup of salvation;  
you have united us  
with Christ and one another;  
and you have made us one  
with all your people in heaven and on earth.  
Now send us forth  
in the power of your Spirit,  
that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world  
and continue for ever  
in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

### **Blessing**

*The Bishop or Priest says*

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin. *Amen.*

May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. *Amen.*

May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life. *Amen.*

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. *Amen.*

### **Hymn**

The Hymnal 1982 #657 - Love divine, all loves excelling,

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**People**

*Thanks be to God.*

## **Prayers, Calendar and Announcements**

### **Prayer List**

Please remember these in your prayers: Buzz and Barbara Dale, Dale, Carter, Bob, BJ, Charles, Sherry, Josephine, Gailya, Ashley, Corbet, Anita, Betty, Angie, Marcel, David, Whitney, those traveling, those deployed, police, fire and first responders, victims of domestic abuse

### **Calendar**

This Morning

Decorating for Christmas

This evening

4:00 pm Eucharist

5:00 pm Adult Sunday School Sunday

12/23

12 noon rehearsal for 11:00 Christmas Eve service

12/24

7:00pm Feast of Incarnation

10:30pm Caroling

11:00pm Feast of Incarnation

12/25

8:30 Eucharist

## **Announcements**

To offer a Poinsettia in memorial or thanksgiving for loved ones please leave a note in the office, or contact Fr. Scott (870 740 9777 / [frscott94@gmail.com](mailto:frscott94@gmail.com)).

Help rebuild the soul of a nation; brick by brick goto

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