



SAINT ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

306 N. Division Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104 • (734) 663-0518 • www.standrewsaa.org

Sunday, December 13, 2020 *The Third Sunday of Advent*

Dear friends:

"A waiting person is a patient person. The word 'patience' means the willingness to stay where we are and live the situation out to the full in the belief that something hidden there will manifest itself to us. Impatient people are always expecting the real thing to happen somewhere else and therefore want to go elsewhere. The moment is empty. But patient people dare to stay where they are. Patient living means to live actively in the present and wait there. Waiting, then, is not passive. It involves nurturing the moment, as a mother nurtures the child that is growing in her womb. Zechariah, Elizabeth, and Mary were present to the moment. That is why they could hear the angel. They were alert, attentive to the voice that spoke to them and said, 'Don't be afraid. Something is happening to you. Pay attention.'"

Henri Nouwen: "A Spirituality of Waiting: Being Alert to God's Presence in Our Lives," Weavings, January/February 1987.

I will admit, I don't "do" patience very well. Never have. I've not known many who do. Compliance, I'm pretty good at that. I'll wear my mask, stay close to home, wash my hands every time I come in, essential shopping trips only, avoid crowds; and when it is offered to my demographic, I will get the Covid vaccine.

That's different from having patience. As Nouwen says in describing the impatient, I long "to go elsewhere," and not just to a favorite vacation spot. (Though that would be nice). That longing is like wishing your life away. Every moment spent wishing things were different, wishing the pandemic was over, wishing for what I don't have or can't do right now, (all very passive activities) is a moment I will never get back. What a waste of the precious gift of time.

As we travel through Advent and Christmas, and into winter with the pandemic still raging, what will we hear if we give ourselves to the moment? The truly attentive might hear angels. I'd be happy to hear just some peace and quiet. Impatience is annoyingly noisy, which makes it impossible to pay attention to anything. God is calling us to pay attention. Something is happening to all us right now. It would be a shame to miss it. Pray for patience.

God bless, *Fr. Alan*

Sunday, December 13

- ▶ [WATCH THE SERVICE](#) at 10:00 am
- ▶ **COFFEE HOUR** on Zoom at 10:45 am

Navigating this Service

Use our [Morning Prayer text](#) or follow the Book of Common Prayer, pg. 75.



Christmas

AT SAINT ANDREW'S

Thursday, December 24

Lessons and Carols • Christmas Pageant
Available anytime after 9:00 am on YouTube

Morning Prayer will be available on YouTube as scheduled on December 6 - 13 - 20 - 27

A **Family Service** will be available on YouTube starting at 9:15 am on December 20 - 27 - January 3

Calendar

Sunday, December 13

Virtual Church School

8:45 am on Zoom

Morning Prayer

10:00 am on YouTube

Virtual Coffee Hour

10:45 am on Zoom

Wednesday, December 16

Virtual Youth Groups

7pm MS / 8pm HS on Zoom

Thursday, December 17

Bible Study

10:00 am on Zoom

Adult Choir Virtual Rehearsal

7:15 pm on Zoom

Sunday, December 20

Family Service

9:15 am on YouTube

Morning Prayer

10:00 am on YouTube

Virtual Coffee Hour

10:45 am on Zoom

Millennials + Z Brunch

12:30 pm on Zoom

Announcements

Thank You!

The church received 213 gift cards for donation to the Ann Arbor Community Center. Your generosity in our Adopt-a-Family project will make a difference for dozens of local families.

Upcoming Events

Family Service to tell the Christmas Story

Watch on YouTube: Starting December 20 at 9:15 am

The Christmas Story will be told this year as part of a special virtual presentation of the Family Service! While Virtual Church School is on winter break you can join Fr. Alan and the Rev. Sally as they tell the Christmas Story beginning with the prophet Isaiah's message of the coming of the Messiah, through Christ's birth and the Epiphany.

This brief (~20 minutes) virtual service will be available December 20, December 27, and January 3 on YouTube starting at 9:15 am and can be watched at any time for your convenience.

The Family Service will be held in place of Virtual Church School on the above dates only. Virtual lessons resume on Sunday, January 10 for Church School and Wednesday, January 6 for Youth Groups.



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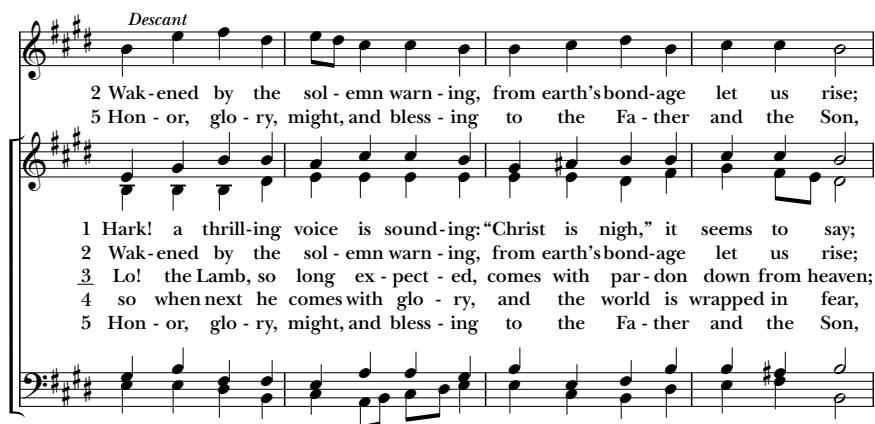
The Third Sunday of Advent

Prelude: *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 659

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)


Opening Hymn: *Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding* Hymnal, no. 59

Descant



2 Wak-ened by the sol- emn warn- ing, from earth's bond- age let us rise;
5 Hon- or, glo- ry, might, and bless- ing to the Fa- ther and the Son,

1 Hark! a thrill- ing voice is sound- ing; "Christ is nigh," it seems to say;
2 Wak- ened by the sol- emn warn- ing, from earth's bond- age let us rise;
3 Lo! the Lamb, so long ex- pect- ed, comes with par- don down from heaven;
4 so when next he comes with glo- ry, and the world is wrapped in fear,
5 Hon- or, glo- ry, might, and bless- ing to the Fa- ther and the Son,



2 Christ, our sun, all sloth dis- pel- ling, shines up- on the morn- ing skies.
5 with the ev- er- last- ing Spi- rit while un- end- ing a- ges run.

1 "Cast a- way the works of dark- ness, O ye child- ren of the day."
2 Christ, our sun, all sloth dis- pel- ling, shines up- on the morn- ing skies.
3 let us haste, with tears of sor- row, one and all to be for- given;
4 may he with his mer- cy shield us, and with words of love draw near.
5 with the ev- er- last- ing Spi- rit while un- end- ing a- ges run.

Opening Sentences

Book of Common Prayer, pg. 78

Confession

Book of Common Prayer, pg. 79


Preces

Hymnal, no. S-33
Book of Common Prayer, pg. 80

Invitatory

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Cantor; then People



Come and save us, O Lord God of hosts.

Cantor




Show the light of your coun · te · nance, and we shall be saved:

People *Cantor*



O Lord God of hosts. Glo · ry to the Fa · ther,




and to the Son, and to the Ho · ly Spi · rit.

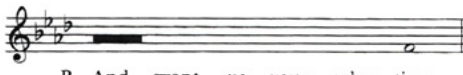
People



Come and save us, O Lord God of hosts.



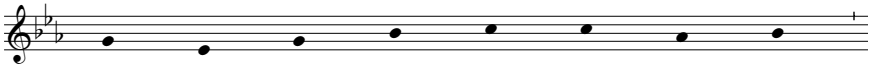
V. Show us your mer · cy, O Lord:



R. And grant us your salva · tion.

Hymn: *Creator of the Stars of Night*

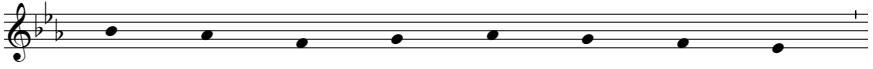
Hymnal, no. 60



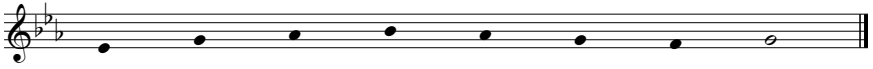
1 Cre - a - tor of the stars of night,
 2 In sor - row that the an - cient curse
 3 When this old world drew on toward night,
 4 At your great Name, O Je - sus, now
 5 Come in your ho - ly might, we pray,
 * 6 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son,



1 your peo - ple's ev - er - last - ing light,
 2 should doom to death a u - ni - verse,
 3 you came; but not in splen - dor bright,
 4 all knees must bend, all hearts must bow:
 5 re - deem us for e - ter - nal day;
 6 and God the Spi - rit, Three in One,



1 O Christ, Re - deem - er of us all,
 2 you came, O Sa - vior, to set free
 3 not as a mon - arch, but the child
 4 all things on earth with one ac - cord,
 5 de - fend us while we dwell be - low
 6 praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry be



1 we pray you hear us when we call.
 2 your own in glo - rious li - ber - ty.
 3 of Ma - ry, blame - less mo - ther mild.
 4 like those in heaven, shall call you Lord.
 5 from all as - saults of our dread foe.
 6 from age to age e - ter - nal - ly.

Psalm 126

- 1 When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, *
then were we like those who dream.
- 2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
and our tongue with shouts of joy.
- 3 Then they said among the nations, *
"The Lord has done great things for them."
- 4 The Lord has done great things for us, *
and we are glad indeed.

- 5 Restore our fortunes, O Lord, *
like the watercourses of the Negev.
- 6 Those who sowed with tears *
will reap with songs of joy.
- 7 Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

Old Testament: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
For I the Lord love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

Canticle: *The Third Song of Isaiah*

Hymnal, no. S-223
Book of Common Prayer, pg. 87

The Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Sermon

Eric Braun, Seminarian Intern

In the Name of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Good morning... or afternoon, or evening, depending on when you see this. The last time I spoke to all of you, I got a note back asking if I could explain a little more about who I am. That's an important question, especially this morning. For me, this morning, the answer is pretty cut and dried. My name is Eric, I'm a Postulant to the priesthood in the diocese, I live in Ypsilanti, my home parish is St. Luke's... just down the road, and for the next two years, I will be interning here at St. Andrew's; getting to know as many of you as I can, learning how things are done here and helping out wherever I'm able with services, committees, and some other projects along the way. There's a lot more I could say, and I'm sure that we'll learn a lot more about each other, but that will come in time. While I've got you, I'd like to share something. I like Advent more than Christmas!

Don't get me wrong. Christmas is a glorious time. It's a joyful celebration, and who doesn't love a good party? I love Advent because of all the energy of possibility. You might be tempted to think of Advent as a gloomy time. Not hard to understand, in the middle of the cold and dark, but consider how each of our services in Advent starts: Light comes into the world, and each week we add a little more. We added another candle today, and next week, we'll add another. Not only is that powerful imagery, it's a physical sign of what we believe. Light is coming into the world! That is what we believe! It's at the core of everything we as a church do: Every service, every ministry, every committee meeting is about understanding how we can be that light in the world, and we're continually in the process of preparing ourselves for what God has in mind. Christmas is coming, yes, but there's important work to do before that... to prepare for the big event.

As the old saying goes: "Well begun is half done." And this week's reading from John is all about the man who is literally preparing the way for the Lord: John the Baptist. Just like we are, John is doing what he can to get everyone ready for the Messiah's arrival, but he's a very unlikely messenger for a king; which is the point. Everything about John is a clue that something new is coming, and things will never be the same afterwards. Just imagine the gossip in the town of Bethany: "There's a man out there baptizing... anyone!"

"Could be he's the one Isaiah spoke of?"

"Look how he dresses!"

"Did you see what he ate?"

Scandalous!

To the citizens of Bethany, this man can't be a priest, and surely he's like no prophet they've ever heard of... but still, he's very compelling. People are seeking him out to be baptized, so there must be more to it. The question is: Just who is this man? And that's just what the priests and Levites go to find out. They don't know what to make of John the Baptist either. Immediately, they begin peppering him with questions:

Are you the Messiah?

No.

Are you a prophet?

No.

Are you Elijah?

NO!

You can almost hear John getting more and more frustrated, as they try to put him in a box that they can understand. The problem is, John the Baptist doesn't fit into any of their ideas about what a holy man should be. I'm sure that they're ready to dismiss him as just another crazy person in the desert. Just then, though... he knocks them back on their heels by quoting Isaiah directly: "*I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'*" Suddenly, there's more going on than anyone realizes. John is much more than he seems, as is the one who will come after him.

Can you imagine? This wild-eyed mystic who doesn't follow any of their rules... he's the herald of the Messiah? No, that just can't be! Not this man.

But that's exactly who John is. In fact this unconventional messenger is the perfect person to get the people ready for Jesus, who really will turn the world that the Pharisees think they understand upside down. John warns them even further saying: "*Among you is one whom you do not know.*" And that's the key. The very concept of who Jesus is, and how Jesus will teach and minister to everyone... especially the poor, lost and forgotten is something so new, so radical, that the guardians of tradition just don't get it. They can't, and I think it's because they are not willing to ask themselves the same thing they want to know about John the Baptist.

"Who are you?"

They don't want things to change... but change is coming, and that question keeps coming up:

"Who Are You?"

The thing about asking a question like that? If you ask it, God will answer. And just like the Pharisees in today's gospel, the answer prepares the way for something new.

Prepare the way.

Ask the question.

"Who Are You?"

Apostles Creed

Book of Common Prayer, pg. 96

The Prayers

Collect of the Day

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.*

Anthem: *O Comfort My People*

Traditional Irish,
arr. David Ogden (b. 1966)

O comfort my people and calm all their fear, and tell them the time of salvation is near. O tell them I come to remove all their shame. Then they will forever give praise to my name. Proclaim to the cities of Juda my word; That gentle yet strong is the hand of the Lord. I rescue the captives, my people defend and bring them to justice and joy without end. All mountains and hills shall become as a plain for vanished are mourning and hunger and pain. And never again shall these war against you. Behold I come quickly, to make all things new.

General Thanksgiving

Book of Common Prayer, pg. 101

Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Concluding Versicle

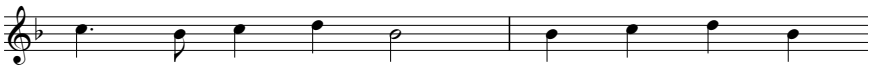
Hymnal, no. S-54

Closing Hymn: *Savior of the Nations Come!*

Hymnal, no. 54



1 Sa - vior of the na - tions, come! Vir - gin's
2 Won - drous birth! Oh, won - drous child of the
3 Thus on earth the Word ap - pears, grac - ing
4 Come, O Fa - ther's sav - ing Son, who o'er



Son, make here your home. Mar - vel now, both
Vir - gin un - de - filed! Might - y God and
his cre - a - ted spheres; hence to death and
sin the vic - tory won. Bound - less shall your



heaven and earth, that the Lord chose such a birth.
Ma - ry's son, ea - ger now his race to run!
hell de - scends, then the heaven - ly throne a - scends.
king - dom be; grant that we its glo - ries see.

Postlude: *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)

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