

St. David's Episcopal Church
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 20, 2020 – 9:00 am

Opening Hymn

1982 Hymnal 55

Redeemer of the Nations Come

- 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**

- 6. All praise, Oun begotten God
All praise to you, eternal Word,
All praise, life giving Spirit praise
All glory to our God Triune**

Lighting of the Candles of the Advent Wreath

Astudillo Family

Reader 1: The fourth candle on an Advent wreath, usually purple, is often called the candle of love. Christmas happened because of God's great love for all people. Let's listen to a reading from John.

Reader 2: "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

Reader1: At Christmas, God gave us the best gift ever. He sent his Son, Jesus, to live with people in this world and show us how we can work with him to create the Kingdom of Heaven.

Light all four candles on your Advent wreath.

All: Three candles, burning bright,
Chasing away darkness, showing God's might.
Three candles, glowing bright,
The blessing of God, giving new sight.

Reader 3: Let us pray.

Dear God, we pray that our faith may be renewed once again, and may we relive the wonder of your love in our lives. In the name of Jesus the Christ, we pray. Amen

O come, O come, Emanuel (verse 1)

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

Priest: Come once more, with eager longing to receive the promises of God.
(as we form the sign of the Cross)

All: Out of the desert places of our lives we gather with joy and gladness.

Priest: Happy are those who help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God.

All: Our God has promised that lonely places and deserts will be glad and blossom as the rose.

Priest: 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.

Priest: Lord, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Priest: Lord, have mercy.

Collect of the Day

Priest The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Priest Let us pray.

Priest In time of anxiety, illness suffering and death, your people turn to you for hope and comfort. 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

2 Samuel 7:1-11,16

Edmund Abramovitz

Now when the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, 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." Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you." But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? 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. 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?" 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; 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. 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, 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. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

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

Psalm: Luke 1:46b-55

Led by Edmund Abramovitz

46b My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
 my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

48 **for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant.**
 From this day all generations will call me blessed:

49 you, the Almighty, have done great things for me
 and holy is your name.

50 **You have mercy on those who fear you,**
 from generation to generation.

51 You have shown strength with your arm
 and scattered the proud in their conceit,

52 **casting down the mighty from their thrones**
 and lifting up the lowly.

53 You have filled the hungry with good things
 and sent the rich away empty.

54 **You have come to the aid of your servant Israel,**
 to remember the promise of mercy,

55 the promise made to our forbears,
 to Abraham and his children forever.

Second Reading

Edmund Abramovitz

Romans 16:25-27

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 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—to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

Reader	The Word of the Lord.
People	Thanks be to God.

Sequence Hymn

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

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!
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!

Deacon**The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.**

People

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. 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. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" 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. 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. For nothing will be impossible with God." 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.

Deacon The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.****Children's Sermon****Allie Graham****Sermon****Father Don**

The Nicene Creed

All: 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

Led by Deacon Hank

Deacon: God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

Deacon: Gracious God, all generations call you blessed. In this holy season we pray for our neighbors of other denominations and faiths. Inspire the faith of their people. Cultivate understanding among us and strengthen us in love and service to our community. We pray especially the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin, our Presiding Bishop Michael, our Bishop William, our Priest Don, our Deacon Hank, Brother John, Pastoral Associate Kate, Deacon Postulant Carol and Postulant Allie. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Deacon: Creator God, you scatter the proud. Everything we have belongs first to you. Bless and protect the seas, mountains, plains, forests, skies, and soils that surround us. Give us humility as we tend them. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Deacon: Righteous God, you humble the powerful and lift up the lowly. We pray for the leaders of all nations, that they amplify the voices of people in need. Guide all people entrusted with leadership, to create societies in which everyone can flourish. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Deacon: Compassionate God, you fill the hungry with good things and send the rich away empty. Nourish those who lack access to adequate food and nutrition. Bless the work of advocates, community organizers, and food pantries. Encourage others to provide for their neighbors in need. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Deacon: Healing God, you pour out mercy to all who cry out to you. Surround everyone in need of healing in body, mind, or spirit with your tender presence especially for those on our parish prayer list.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Deacon: We especially pray today in remembrance and thanksgiving for the birthdays of Stephanie Peeters, Carol Hartmaier, Carol Miller, Ryan Hegedus, and Kim Neighbor and also the wedding anniversaries of John & Bonnie Patterson and Brian & Abbi Clissold. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Deacon: Eternal God, you are faithful to the promises you made to our forebears. We pray especially for those taken by the coronavirus. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Deacon: Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Confession of Sin

**All: Holy and loving God,
we have dwelt in darkness and preferred it to the light;
we have been proud of our accomplishments
and despaired over our shortcomings.
Smooth down the mountains of our pride,
and lift up the valleys of our doubts.**

**Open a path in the wilderness of our lives that we might find
our way to you again.
Refine us and prepare us once again for life in your kingdom.
Hear our prayer, O Lord. Amen.**

**Breathe your grace into our lives.
Forgive our wandering ways, and guide us along your paths of
peace.
When we lose our way, and forget the reason and purpose of
this season,
carry us back to you.
Lead us up to that high mountain of faith and hope,
that we might truly proclaim:
"Here is our God!"**

Priest: "Comfort, O comfort my people," says our God. You have served your term. Your penalty is paid. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

All: Amen.

The Peace

Priest: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

The Holy Communion

Priest: Gracious and generous Creator, your people come before you this day with the offering of their whole selves, of all that they are, and all that they have. The gifts they have made to support the ministry and mission of St. David's Church are a symbol of their very lives and their commitment to invest a portion of themselves in your on-going work in the world. May those who make this sacrifice of praise and gratitude be so filled with your own generous spirit, that it pours out of each and every one into the world around them. Hear these prayers and accept our humble gifts. Bless them. Make them abound that all people through our work and sacrifice in your name, may know and feel your abundant blessings. All this we ask of you, our Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. **Amen.**

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Priest: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Priest: It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, holy Father, almighty and eternal God. In this Season of Advent, as we remember the first coming of Jesus, born among us, looking forward once again to Christmas, and as we wait in joyful expectation for the return of Christ our Lord on the last day, we huddle in the safety of our homes, conscious of the dangers of a pandemic that has overtaken the whole world.

So we turn to your words, “Whenever you do this,
[whenever you eat and drink,] do it in remembrance of me.”

We have feasted on your word,
and now we give thanks that your love reaches to our generation
so that having this food before us reminds us
of the abundance of your goodness
through which we are sustained every day.

With sorrow,
we mourn the loss of receiving your blessed Body and Blood.
With gratitude, we take what you have made available to us
as a taste of your abundant grace. We thank you, Lord, our God

All: We thank you, Lord our God.

Priest: As one family we now pray as our Savior Christ has taught us,

**All: 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.**

Priest: Loving God, bless all those spiritually gathered here today,
as we remember the friendship and fellowship of our church.
Thank you for the blessings of our individual and collective God-
given gifts.
Place in our hearts the desire to make a difference to our families,
to our community, to our country,
and to the many cultures and peoples worldwide.
Give us peace in these times of distraction and uncertainty.
Thank you for food in a world where many know only hunger;
For our faith in a world where many know fear;
For friends in a world where many know only loneliness.

Please bless this food we are about to share,
Bless those through whose work we have it
and those who have worked to make today
the special occasion that it is.
For all of this we give you thanks.

All: We give you thanks.

Led by Kate O'Connor

In union, O Lord, with your faithful people at every altar of your Church, we desire to offer to you our praise and thanksgiving. We remember your death, Lord Christ; we proclaim your resurrection; we await your coming in glory. Since we cannot receive you today in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, we pray that you will come spiritually into our hearts. Cleanse and strengthen us with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let us never be separated from you. May we live in you, and you in us, in this life and in the life to come. **Amen.**

Communion Music

The Katona Family

"Away in a Manger" - Traditional Carol

St. David's Creche Display

All eat and drink from the food before us. After all have tasted of the food (the food may be finished after the conclusion of the service) and the music has concluded.

Post Communion Prayer

Priest: Let us pray

**All: Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ.**

**You have fed us with the spiritual food of your Word
and you have given us the means to partake
of the good things you have given us.
Make us mindful now that you have called us
to be your presence in this world,
and grant us strength and courage to love
and serve you and the people you have set before us
with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Vestry and Discernment Committee Prayer

All: Lord, we ask you to guide the members of our Vestry and Discernment Committee so that they may hear Your voice leading St. David's Church into the future to which you are calling us.
Give them wisdom and insight into the qualities of Leadership needed to best serve our precious church.
Inspire also the person You intend to be our spiritual leader and pastor. Give us all a sense of happy anticipation as we await the one we know will be the right one according to Your plan for us.
We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Birthday Blessings

Anniversary Blessings

Announcements

Final Blessing

Priest: Let the Lord steer you in the way of truth.
Be on your guard so that you will not be caught up in the trivialities and anxieties of the world.
Be alert at all times and pray for strength to escape the traps that would keep you from God.

And may God make you increase in love for one another;
May Christ Jesus teach you how to live in God's ways;
and may the Holy Spirit strengthen your hearts in holiness, as you ready yourselves for the coming of the Lord.

May the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit ✚ be with you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding

- 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."**

- 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;**

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

Dismissal

Deacon: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, and one another.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Announcements

Because of the recent rise in the infection rate of Covid-19 in the state of New Jersey, the Bishop has counseled churches of the Diocese to suspend in-person worship. For the time, St. David's will revert to the kind of online Zoom service that we had through the spring and summer. A special Advent service bulletin for our Zoom services will be found on the Events page of the website. You are encouraged to have an Advent Wreath at home, and join as families from the parish lead the candle lighting each week. We have every reason to hope that major shut-down across the state will bring a decrease in the infection rate and allow us to resume in-person worship before Christmas.

When the church is once again open for worship, registration for the in-person service is primarily online, using the link found on the Events page of the parish website. It will cap attendance at 25 households. We will keep three future services up so that you can pre-register. Right now, it seems that the maximum number of registrants is not being met, so if you have already attended a service and you would want to attend the following week, you may do so.

Moving forward, registration for services will remain open and only close once the maximum capacity limitation of 25 is met.

The altar party (priest, deacon, lay reader, music director) must also register (remember to put your title next to your name.)

Stewardship 2021: Reflection and Renewal

It's not too late to make your pledge to St. David's!

*Please return your pledge card to the office,
90 S. Main Street, Cranbury NJ 08512 or
pledge online - click on the 'Stewardship' tab.*



The African Team Ministry craft sale is virtual this year!

Please visit their online shop at
<https://africanteamstore.square.site>

Thank you for continuing to support this ministry.

The Prayer Station - “Just let God into the situation and hold it there”

Dr. Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, on intercessory prayer.

Deacon Hank and Pastoral Care Associate Kate are available to pray with you following the dismissal from the Sunday morning service.

The station is open for 30 minutes.

They each have their own Zoom link on the Events page. Join them by clicking on the link with their name.

They look forward to meeting you in prayer.



Children’s Christmas Eve Service + 12/24/20

This year, our Children’s Christmas Eve Service will be outdoors – rain or shine – beginning at 4:30 PM in the parking lot ‘island.’ Please consider wearing a simple costume of either a head dress, walking staff, or maybe a long robe! Spacing ourselves in family units about a new crèche scene, we will gradually fill it with the animals and figures of the Nativity while reading the Story of Jesus’ Birth!

PLEASE JOIN US! You can Register to attend with Jean Hegedus (jean.t.hegedus@lycra.com) and let her know whether your family would like to offer one of the READINGS! Please call me if you would like to Help, or with any questions.

Deacon Hank Bristol 609-915-5134 c

Something New in Pastoral Care! Telephone Call Ministry

We want to stay connected as a St. David's community, so several of our parishioners are each taking a page from the roster and will call everyone on that page – including YOU - every month or two.

They'll be making a friendly visit with some conversation, and then ask how you are doing. It's something we can do as "way of love" – a way our Presiding Bishop Michael Curry calls us to live and be for one another. Don't be surprised when you hear from us!

Pastoral Associate Kate will continue making her calls, but now you'll also hear from another St. David's parishioner as well. It's all good!

You Are Invited to Contemplative Prayer

St. David's and St. Francis Dunellen, are partnered to offer us multiple opportunities for Contemplative Prayer each month.

St. David's meets on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month at 7 PM - December 7th and 21st.

<http://www.stdavidscranbury.com/events.html> You can phone into St. David's Zoom by calling 1-646-876-9923, meeting ID 451 815-3355#, and when prompted for participant ID press #.

St. Francis' group meets every Wednesday at 1 PM

<https://www.stfrancisdunellen.org> You can phone into St. Francis Zoom by calling 1-669-900-6833, meeting ID 595-854-4455 #, when prompted for participant ID press #, for password enter 2475689.

No experience with silent prayer or meditation is needed, just the desire to pray "the simplest form of prayer there is" (Cynthia Bourgeault), and at a time such as this, keeping it simple may be exactly what is needed! We provide an introduction to contemplative prayer at the beginning of each session.

If you have any questions or would like to learn about contemplative prayer before joining us, contact Kate at 609-658-7315 or k_oconnor22@verizon.net

Please remember in your Prayers this week: Judy Evans, Tom Evans, Karen Rowden, Michael Koretsky, Don Nancoo, Lourdes Sanchez, Nora, Gabriel, Adrian Sun, Cameron Polanco, Tappen Soper, Barbara, Elke Lindemann, Mary Channon Cushing, Ken Robinson, Lynda Hammel, Beau Sawyer, Meridith Stout, Yvonne Tessier, Theresa Wilson, Ed Merkel, Tracy Rozkowski, Alyssa, Debbie, Susan Harroun, Carol Toth, Omar Holmes, Kathleen Sinclair, Ron Surtz, Sue Dell, Talan, Linda, Rita, Marion, Lisa, Lillian, David Muggeo, Jane Muggeo, Lisa Muggeo, Gary Long, Diane Roby, Arthur Roby, Laura, Mary, Jeff Reed, Paul Szymanski, Bea, Rachel Krimkowitz, Harry Krimkowitz, Nicole Sitko, Thomas Gregory, Rita Lecorchick, Robin Machnik, Joanne Morse, Roger Hammel, Timothy Doyle, Linda Turato, Adam Krimkowitz, Neal Rouse, Loraine, Kathy, Laura, Cliff Shore, Alice Wilberforce, Doug Szalai, Lily Chung, Bill, Piper Sousa, Hilda Delgado, Carl, Kai, Tom Coulter, Joyce, Brian, Carl, Joyce, Nanci B., Stewart Sowter, Kristen Holobowicz, Sarah Nestrook, Ted, Katie Turner, Jennie Herbert, Barbara Ann Stoner, George Grau, Sharon, Barbara M., Leslie Terhune, Diane, Aiden, Keith Franks, Carley Machnik, Gary Kaylor, Baby NcKeana Grace and Family.

(Names remain on the healing list for four weeks. Please contact the parish office to have names added or to extend those already on the list)

Pray for those in the Armed Forces and others who are serving at home and abroad: Donald Whitlock, James McDermott, Joseph Matson, Gregory Seymour, James Kelly, Sam Crumbaugh, Ken St. Germain, Trevor Stranko, Grace Stranko, Drew Vigliotti, Shawn Porter, Nathan Pane and John Michael Vavala.