

# Advent 2023



## St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

*Saint Stephen's welcomes everyone who wishes to follow Christ, worship together, grow in faith and share God's love through service to others.*

**Wednesday, 20 December 2023 9:30am**

## Constant and Always

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Rev Allison Cornell**

### Greeting

Presider

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

People

**And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

**Lighting of the Advent Wreath - ##54 vs.1-2: "Savior of the nations, come!"**  
*(Congregation sings while the candle(s) on the wreath are lighted)*



1 Sa - vior of the na - tions, come! Vir - gin's  
2 Won - drous birth! Oh, won - drous child of the



Son, make here your home. Mar - vel now, both  
Vir - gin un - de - filed! Might - y God and



heaven and earth, that the Lord chose such a birth.  
Ma - ry's son, ea - ger now his race to run!

## Collect of the Day

**Presider** The Lord be with you.

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

**Presider** Let us pray.

**All:** **Constant Companion, you are “with us” more than we can imagine. Increase in me that awareness of your closeness - no matter what is happening. Amen.**

## The Word of God *(please be seated for the lessons)*

### First Reading : Isaiah 7:10-14

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.

**Reader:** The word of the Lord.

**People:** Thanks be to God.

## The Psalm

### Psalm 119: 65-72

**65** You have dealt well with your servant, O Lord, according to your word.

**66** Teach me good judgement and knowledge, for I believe in your commandments.

**67** Before I was humbled I went astray, but now I keep your word.

**68** You are good and do good; teach me your statutes.

**69** The arrogant smear me with lies, but with my whole heart I keep your precepts.

**70** Their hearts are fat and gross, but I delight in your law.

**71** It is good for me that I was humbled, so that I might learn your statutes.

**72** The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

## Gospel Reading

**Deacon:** The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to **Luke (1:26-38):**

**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 for ever, 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**

### **Reflection/Homily**

**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:

*Leader: Show us your mercy, O Lord;*

**All: And grant us your salvation.**

*Leader: Clothe your ministers with righteousness;*

**All: Let your people sing with joy.**

*Leader: Give peace, O Lord, in all the world*

**All: For only in you can we live in safety.**

*Leader: Lord keep this nation under your care;*

**All: And guide us in the way of justice and truth**

*Leader: Let your way be known upon Earth;*

**All: Your saving health among all nations.**

*Leader: Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;*

**All: Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

*Leader: Create in us clean hearts, O God;*

**All: And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.**

*Leader: In the Anglican cycle of prayer we pray for **The Diocese of Bethlehem – The Episcopal Church.***

*In the Diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for **St. Andrew's, in Tucson.***

*We acknowledge and pay respect to the first peoples of this land especially the Apache and Tohono O'odham who call this area their home.*

*Rejoicing in the fellowship of all your saints,*

**All: We commend these we pray for, ourselves, and the whole creation to your unfailing love. Amen.**

## Confession of Sin

*Deacon: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.*

*(The people stand, sit, or kneel. A short pause may be kept)*

**All: 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.**

## Absolution

*Presider: 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.*

## **Exchange of the Peace**

Presider *May the peace of Christ be always with you*

All **And also with you.**

*The Ministers and People exchange signs of peace (peace sign, hugs, handshakes, fist bumps...)*

## **Offertory**

The Presider: Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name, bring offerings and come into his courts.

## **Holy Communion**

### **The Great Thanksgiving**

**Rite II Prayer B BCP p. 372**

Presider *The Lord be with you.*

People **And also with you.**

Presider *Lift up your hearts.*

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

Presider *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

*Presider*

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, became human of the Virgin Mary his mother; that that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become your children.

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:

**All:** *Sanctus from Mass of Creation*

**Holy, Holy, Holy,  
Lord God of Hosts.**

**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.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

*The people stand, sit, or kneel.*

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son.

For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, 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, according to his command, O Father,

**We remember his death, We proclaim his resurrection,  
We await his coming in glory;**

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts (+) that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant.

Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified (+) by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

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 forever. **AMEN.**

And now as Jesus taught us, we pray:

**Lord's Prayer:**

**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 *(In silence the Presider breaks the bread)*

**Fraction Anthem:**

Lamb of God S-163

**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.**

**Invitation to Communion:**

Presider: 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 and with thanksgiving.

*(In this church, everyone is welcome to receive the bread and wine of Holy Communion. The bread is gluten free and it is real wine. If you prefer to dip/intinct your bread into the wine, please come to the left altar rail. If you prefer to sip the wine from the cup, please come to the right altar rail. If you prefer to receive a blessing instead of the bread and wine, come to either rail and cross your arms over your chest and the priest will bless you).*

**Birthday, Anniversary, Healing, Travel and Gratitude acknowledgement**

**Post Communion Prayer** *The people stand as they are able.*

Presider: Let us pray:

*Presider and People*

**Almighty and ever-living 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.**

**Blessing**

Presider: May the simplicity, stillness, and serenity of this Advent season bring peace and fulfillment to your hearts and homes; and the blessing of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you now and always. **Amen.**

**The Dismissal:**

Deacon: People of St. Stephen's, what does God call us to do?

**People: We are called to love and serve.**

Deacon: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord! Alleluia, alleluia!

**People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

