

St. Philip's Episcopal Church
The Third Sunday of Advent
December 14, 2025 10:00 AM - Holy Eucharist Rite II

***We, at St. Philip's Church strive to love God and love others
in all we do.***

***Before the service, speak to the Lord;
During the service, let the Lord speak to you;
After the service, speak to one another.***

*Please quietly prepare for worship respecting
those around you who may be praying.*

***Call to Worship – “My Spirit is Longing”
My spirit is longing for you, my God: my spirit is waiting in hope.
My spirit is longing for you my God; my spirit is waiting in hope.***

Please stand as you are able.

Opening Hymn: “Comfort, Comfort Ye My People” (#67)

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Celebrant: Our King and Savior now draws near.

People: Come, Let us adore Him.

Opening Acclamation

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

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

Celebrant: 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. ***People: Amen.***

Kyrie (S96)

Lord have Mercy , Lord have Mercy,

Christ have Mercy, Christ have Mercy,

Lord have Mercy, O Lord have Mercy, Lord have Mercy, O 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 Liturgy of the Word

Reading from the Prophet 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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Canticle 15

The Song of Mary *Magnificat*

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.

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

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children 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.*

A Reading from the Letter of 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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able.

Sequence Hymn: "Rejoice! Rejoice Believers" (#68 v.1-2)

The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew (11:2-11)

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.”

Deacon: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Sequence Hymn - “Rejoice! Rejoice Believers” (#68 v. 3)

Sermon

Mother Betty

The Nicene Creed

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 (Form 1)

Deacon: With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord, saying "Lord, have mercy."

Deacon: 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.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our Bishop, Rob and our Bishop-Elect Sarah, and for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our President, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this city for every city and community, and for those who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: 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.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, and for all the departed, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That we may end our lives in faith and hope, without suffering and without reproach, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: In the communion of saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life, to Christ our God.

People: To thee, O Lord our God.

Silence

Celebrant: Hasten, O Father, the coming of your kingdom; and grant that we your servants, who now live by faith, may with joy behold your Son at his coming in glorious majesty; even Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate.

People: Amen

Confession and Absolution

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

***Deacon 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.**

Celebrant: 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.

People: Amen.

The Peace (Please stand as you are able)

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

People: And also with you.

Birthday and Anniversary Prayers

Birthday

Celebrant: Let us pray:

People: O God our times are truly in your hands. Look with favor upon your Servant(s) as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Anniversary

Celebrant: Let us pray:

People: Look with favor on these your children whom you have united in marriage. As they celebrate the anniversary of their wedding, enable them to continue to ask for your help and the intercession of all the saints. In good times and in difficult, may they continue to grow in love for each other, and may they continue to resolve to be of one heart in the bond of peace through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Welcoming

Ministry in Focus

Collect for the Rector Search Committee

Loving God, through the Holy Spirit, guide our search committee in discerning the rector You have called for us. Keep them faithful to Your will, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Offertory Sentence: Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name, bring offering and come into his courts.

Offertory

(Congregation stands and sings the following with the presentation of gifts.)

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. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Great Thanksgiving – Eucharistic Prayer A

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

Celebrant and People (S130)

**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.

Celebrant: 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.

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.**

Celebrant: 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. **People: *AMEN.***

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**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

Celebrant: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People: Therefore, let us keep the feast.

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.

Communion

How to receive Holy Communion:

After you receive the bread you may choose one of three options regarding the wine.

- 1. DRINK: Immediately consume your bread and step to the chalice bearer farthest from the priest serving the bread. This is the common cup designated for you to take a drink from. Dipping the bread into this cup is NOT permitted.*
- 2. INTINCT: Holding your bread, go to the first chalice bearer who is holding a small glass cup. This cup is designated for intinction (dipping) only. As you stand in front of the chalice bearer, they will offer the words of administration and you may dip your bread into the shallow cup. Please note there is only a small quantity of wine in this chalice to ensure fingers do not touch the wine.*
- 3. NO WINE: Immediately consume your bread and carefully walk past both chalices if you desire to not take part in the wine. Please know that receiving communion in one species only is still considered a full and valid communion.*

Post Communion Prayer

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sending Prayer for Lay Eucharistic Visitors

Celebrant: In the name of Christ, and of this congregation, we send you forth bearing the body and blood of Christ to (_____), who cannot be with us today. Take God's holy Word, the prayers of this congregation, and this holy food for holy people.

People: We who are many are one Body because we share one bread, one cup.

Celebrant: Blessing.

People: Amen.

Hymn – “Watchman, Tell us of the Night” (#640)

Deacon: The Dismissal

People: Thanks be to God

Celebrant and Preacher: Mother Betty Glover

Deacon: Deacon Pam Hayes

Acolytes: Peyton Myers, Sophia Olfano

Lay Eucharistic Ministers: Jim Williams, Ellen Wester, Cynthia Davis

Lay Readers: Cynthia Davis, Jane Mitchell

Ushers: Dennis Courtnage, Cathie Courtnage, Carol Parnell, Jane Mitchell

Vestry Person of the Day: Donna Foster



The flowers on the Altar are given to the Glory of God

In Loving Memory of Carol Ann Mericle

by Dick Mericle and Family

AND

In Loving Memory of Elizabeth D. Valente (12-15-22 to 4-12-25)

By Joanne Valente

St. Philip's Contacts

The Rt. Rev. Rob Skirving – Bishop of East Carolina

The Rev. Sarah Fisher – Bishop Elect of East Carolina

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