
WELCOME

St. Clare's Episcopal Church

Third Sunday of Advent
December 17, 2023

HOLY EUCHARIST RITE II

The Word of God

Opening Voluntary

The King Shall Come

Charles Callahan

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Reader: We light this candle as a symbol of Christ our Joy.
May the joyful promise of your presence, O God, make us joyful in our hope of salvation.

People *O Come, O Come Emmanuel.*

Processional Hymn

Blessed be the King whose coming

Hymnal 74

The Opening Acclamation

Celebrant Blessed are you, holy and living One.

People You come to your people and set them free.

Collect for Purity

BCP 355

The 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.*

The Lessons

The First Lesson – 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.

The Word of the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Psalm 126

BCP 782

The Second Lesson – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

The Word of the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Sequence Hymn

Lo! He comes, with clouds descending

Hymnal 57

The Holy Gospel – John 1:6-8, 19-28

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People: *Glory to you Lord Christ.*

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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

People: *Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

The Sermon

The Rev. Liz Schellingerhoudt

A period of silence is kept

The Nicene Creed

BCP 358

The Prayers of the People

The Leader and People pray responsively

Presider: Gracious God, you have spoken through your prophets and called us to make straight the way of the Lord: Visit us with your grace to cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations, as we pray: God has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.

Litanist: O God of peace, you have called your people to rejoice always and to pray without ceasing, giving thanks in all circumstances: Sanctify your Church and her members that our spirit and soul and body may be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has done great things for us,

and we are glad indeed.

God of Righteousness and Mercy, you love justice and hate wrongdoing: Guide our leaders and all in authority, especially those in Israel and Hamas, and Russia and Ukraine, that they may bring good news to the oppressed, bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, repair the ruined cities and cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. God has done great things for us,

and we are glad indeed.

God of Compassion, look upon the needs of the world: Proclaim the year of your favor, and clothe your children with the garments of salvation and the robe of righteousness. God has done great things for us,

and we are glad indeed.

God of Grace, be among us in this community that we may be a people whom you have sanctified to testify to the light and to become oaks of righteousness. God has done great things for us,

and we are glad indeed.

Receive our prayers for those for whom we pray in intercession; give them courage and hope in their troubles now as we say their names responsively: Frank, Lamar, John, Peter, Jane, Audrey, Grady, Arlene, Bob, Kathy, Peg, Kathryn, Piper, Marie, Greg, Sharon, Ben, Ronan, Jackson, Rachel, Bucky, Ronald, and Elba; for Keri, Carolyn, Bonnie, MaryAnn, Travis, Annie, Jane, Sally, Mary, Joy, Anne, McKinley, Katie, Edwina, Terri, Herb H., Al, Josh, Roz, Bob, Ann, Delores, Mary Lou, Pat, and Joan.

Hear our gratitude as we offer our thanksgivings, especially for those celebrating birthdays, including Floss Fasy, Jason Henson, Sandy Bell, Fran Smith, Cameron Lejeune, and Ben Workman; and those celebrating anniversaries, including Lisa & Tom McElfresh, and Edie & Rick Pollin.

Comfort all who mourn, giving them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit, as we remember before you those who have died, especially Janice, victims of the Tennessee tornado, Joanne, and Mike Litton. God has done great things for us,

and we are glad indeed.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing the wine to be consecrated.

We thank you that on the night before he died for us Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, gave it to his friends and said: "Take, eat, this is my Body, broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper Jesus took the cup of wine, said the blessing, gave it to his friends and said: "Drink this, all of you: this cup is the new Covenant in my Blood, poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

And so, remembering all that was done for us: the cross, the tomb, the resurrection and ascension, longing for Christ's coming in glory, and presenting to you these gifts your earth has formed and human hands have made, we acclaim you, O Christ:

Celebrant and people

Dying, you destroyed our death.

Rising, you restored our life.

Christ Jesus, come in glory!

The Celebrant continues

Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine that they may be to us the Body and Blood of your Christ. Grant that we, burning with your Spirit's power, may be a people of hope, justice and love. Giver of Life, draw us together in the Body of Christ, and in the fullness of time gather us with blessed St. Clare all your people into the joy of our true eternal home.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, we worship you our God and Creator in voices of unending praise.

Blessed are you now and for ever. *AMEN.*

The Lord's Prayer (*contemporary, sung*)

Hymnal S-148

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

Fraction Anthem

Hymnal S-157

Distribution of Communion

BCP 364

Communion Hymns

*What is the crying at Jordan?
The great forerunner of the morn*

Hymnal 69

Hymnal 272

Post Communion Prayer

BCP 366

The Blessing

Processional Hymn

Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding

Hymnal 59

Dismissal

Closing Voluntary

A Major

Friedrich Wilhelm Zachau

Announcements

Evening Prayer – Every weekday during Advent (Dec 4-22), we will hold Evening Prayer in the Assisi Chapel at 5:00 PM.

Christmas Flowers - It's time to think about making the church look festive for Christmas! You will find envelopes in the pews to make your donations for flowers. You can also indicate your dedication when you send your check. To include your dedication in the bulletin, please send in your donation no later than December 18th. All donations help provide altar arrangements throughout the year and support our beautiful gardens.

The Advent Outreach Tree is back! Paper cards adorn the tree in the Narthex, and each donation of \$10 or more to Sleep in Heavenly Peace earns an ornament that may be given to friends and family, or placed in stockings, to let them know that a gift was made in their honor. Sleep in Heavenly Peace provides beds for children in Union County.

We will celebrate our octo- and nonagenarians (parishioners 80 and older) with a lunch tomorrow, December 18th at Noon. Our celebration will be held at Liz's home, 314 Smoke Rise Ridge, Blairsville, GA 30512. Please RSVP using the link in the eClare or by calling Carlene Dockery at 404-323-4377.

A Service of Healing and Remembrance will be held on Wednesday, December 20th, at 12:15 PM in the Assisi Chapel. The holidays can bring into sharp focus the loss of a loved one, disappointments, loneliness, bad memories, and a host of other difficult feelings. This service offers us a space to come together and share our challenges during this time of year.

Food Pantry Donations - Help us stock the Food Pantry for Christmas! All members of our community deserve hearty, comforting food, especially as the temperatures drop. In this season of giving, let us remember our call to feed the hungry.



Church Calendar

Advent IV, Sunday, December 24th

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist

12:00 PM Decorate the church for Christmas

Christmas Eve Service

7:15 PM – 7:50 PM Christmas crafts with children in the parish hall

7:30 PM Prelude Music by Chancel Choir

8:00 PM Festive Eucharist with reception following the service

New Year's Eve, Sunday, December 31st

10:30 AM – Christmas Lessons and Carols, followed by Bon Voyage to the Duellos *Katherine, Daniel, Camilla, and James Duello are heading to New Zealand in 2024. Let's send them off with lots of love from St. Clare's! Join us in the Parish Hall after Christmas Lessons and Carols for a chance to wish them well on their adventures, until we see them again.*

Holidays/Office Closings

December 25-Jan 1 – Christmas Week & New Year's Day

Weekly Services

Sundays, HE Rite II, 10:30 AM (In person and on Facebook)

Wednesdays, Centering Prayer, 11:30 AM (Assisi Chapel)

Wednesdays, HE Rite II, 12:15 PM (Assisi Chapel)

Morning Prayer is 8:00 AM M-F (Facebook)

Evening Prayer is 5:00 PM M-F (Assisi Chapel and on Facebook)

Compline is 7:30 PM M-F (Facebook)

Choral Compline, First Sundays, 7:00 PM (In person and on Facebook)

*Welcoming all people to worship with us.
Unapologetically Christian.
Learning to love like Jesus.*

Those Who Serve

December 17, 2023

Verger – Michael Smith-Foot
Crucifer – Eli Smith-Foot
Lector 1 – BJ Foster
Lector 2 – Lynnae Boudreau
Eucharistic Minister – Susan Marr
Ushers – Lynne Joynes & Jerome Laux
Eucharistic Visitor – Lamar Barber
Greeter – Jo Ellen Clow
VPOD – Lynnae Boudreau
Altar Guild – Kathy McNeese
Flower Guild – Entire Guild
Videographer – Haley Dyer
Fellowship – Kathy McNeese & Frank Kinmonth

2023 Vestry

Lynnae Boudreau, Senior Warden
Lisa McElfresh, Junior Warden
Lamar Barber, Treasurer
Jo Ellen Clow, Clerk
Sandy Calloway
Amy Cox
Katherine Duello
Lynne Joynes
Pat Murray
Herb Pilcher
Michael Smith-Foot

Clergy and Staff

Bishop of Diocese of Atlanta
The Right Rev. Robert C. Wright
Rector—The Rev. Liz Schellingerhoudt, OA
Liz@StClaresEpiscopal.org
Parish Administrator—Kitty Taylor
Admin@StClaresEpiscopal.org
Treasurer—Lamar Barber
treasurer@stclaresepiscopal.org
Organist-Choirmaster—Karen Calloway
edwins@windstream.net
Sunday Sexton—Billy Clayton

St. Clare's Episcopal Church
777 Ledford Road, Blairsville, GA 30512
Office Hours: Mon—Thurs 9:00-5:00
Phone: 706-745-0607
Email: Admin@StClaresEpiscopal.org