



Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 21, 2025, 10:00 AM
Join the Path Forward

Our Mission as St. James Episcopal Church; 1750 – Today

We are a welcoming community that invites all to share God's light and beauty through music, liturgy and action; to seek the sacred and to walk in love with all creation.



Service Participants

CELEBRANT:	Rev. Judy Ferguson
PREACHER:	Josh Leicht
ORGANIST and CHOIR DIRECTOR:	Michael Mulder
LAY READER:	Susan Romanski
LECTOR:	Roe Intrieri
PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:	Dawn Irizarry
USHER:	Suzanne Volpe
COFFEE HOUR HOST:	Jeanne Farewell

St. James Episcopal Church

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Services live streamed at <https://www.facebook.com/stjamesnorthsalemny/videos>

Sr. Steward: Janet Keyes (845) 269-0289 **Jr. Steward:** Josh Leicht (914) 669-6743
Vestry: Margaret Eaton Robert Herzberg Michael Mulder Susan Romanski
Tom Stratman Carolyn Young

Music Director: Michael Mulder (914) 485-1128
Pledge Recorders: Kristin Delli Carpini (845) 669-6146 Josh Leicht (914) 669-6743
Treasurer: Kipp Good (646) 641-9286

HOLY EUCHARIST: Rite II

WORD OF GOD

Prelude

Sleepers, Wake! By Walter Anderson

Michael Mulder

Opening Hymn

O come, O come, Emmanuel

Hymnal # 56

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Celebrant: Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Last Sunday we lit the Candle of Love. We light it [*Third candle is lit*] and the Candles of Hope and Peace [*First and Second candles are lit*] again as we remember that Jesus, born in Bethlehem will come again to fulfill all of God's promises and bring us everlasting peace and **joy**.

Fourth candle is lit.

Today we light the Fourth Candle of Advent, the Candle of **Joy**. When the angel Gabriel told Mary that a special child would be born to her she was filled with **joy**. She sang a song that began with the words: "My soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." Just as the birth of Jesus gave great **joy** to his mother, so his presence in the world gave **joy** to those who had none before. He healed them and gave them hope and peace when they believed in him. From hope, peace and love grows **joy**.

Joy is like a light shining in a dark place. As we look at this candle we celebrate the **joy** we find in Jesus Christ.

Leader: Let us pray:

People: Thank you God for the **joy you give us.**

We ask that as we wait for all your promises to come true,

and for Christ to come again,

that you would remain present with us.

Help us today, and everyday to worship you,

to hear your word, and to do your will

by sharing your **joy with each other.**

We ask it in the name of the one who was born in Bethlehem. Amen.

Opening Sentences

Celebrant: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins;

People: His mercy endures for ever. Amen.

Collect for Purity

Celebrant: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open,

People: all desires known,

Celebrant: and from you no secrets are hid:

People: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts

Celebrant: by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,

People: that we may perfectly love you,

Celebrant: and worthily magnify your holy Name;

People: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord, have mer - cy.

Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

Music: Kevin R. Hackett (b. 1956), from *Hymn Tunes Mass*; based on *Herzliebster Jesu*, Johan Cruger (1598-1662), alt.
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Salutation and Collect of the Day

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray. 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. **Amen.**

Old Testament

A Reading from the Book of Isaiah [7:10-16]

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. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18 *Qui regis Israel*

BCP 702

1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

- 2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
stir up your strength and come to help us.
- 3 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 4 O Lord God of hosts, *
how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people?
- 5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- 6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- 7 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 16 Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.
- 17 And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.
- 18 Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

New Testament

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans [1:1-7]

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, to all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lay Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Please stand.

Sequence Hymn

To the Name of our Salvation

Hymnal # 249

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew [1:18-25]

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he

named him Jesus.

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Sermon

Mr. Josh Leicht

Profession of Faith (South Indian), *said together, standing*

**We believe in God, who creates all things,
who embraces all things, who celebrates all things,
who is present in every part of the fabric of creation.**

**We believe in God as the source of all life,
who baptizes this planet with living water.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ, the suffering one, the poor one,
the malnourished one, the climate refugee,
who loves and cares for this world
and who suffers with it.**

**And we believe in Jesus Christ, the seed of life,
who came to reconcile and renew this world
and everything in it.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the breath of God,
who moves with God
and who moves among and with us today.**

We believe in everlasting life in God.

**And we believe in the hope that one day
God will put an end to death and all destructive forces.**

Prayers of the People

Form IV

BCP 388

Reader: Let us pray for the Church and for the world. Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

Silence

Reader: Lord in your mercy

People: Hear our prayer.

Reader: Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

Silence

Reader: Lord in your mercy

People: Hear our prayer.

Reader: Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

Silence

Reader: Lord in your mercy

People: Hear our prayer.

Reader: Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us.

Silence

Reader: Lord in your mercy

People: Hear our prayer.

Reader: Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation, especially **Bennett, Jean H., Sheryl and family, Ginny and Maar family, Dylan and Ann Marie, Jeffrey, Marian H., Michelle B., Maureen, Rob K., Anne H., Nina T., Judy and Family, Janet, Katie, Annie, Mackenzie, Bill, Jennifer C., Christine, Marissa, Bro, Kathleen, Family and friends of Alan Guthrie, Family and friends of Dottie Intriari, those who have lost their jobs; those who have been taken and put into detention centers, especially Ben and Ali;** and watch over those who care for them; that they may be delivered from their distress. We pray for guidance for the **resolution of conflicts around the world, all those who suffer injustice and violence in the US and abroad, mitigation of the effects of climate change, those who suffer from mental illness, and our Community Ministries. May those who govern, especially Donald our President, do so for the good of their people and with the respect and gentleness you show to those who are most weak and vulnerable.**

Silence

Reader: Lord in your mercy

People: Hear our prayer.

Reader: We commend to your mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled, especially *Thomas, Apostle; Stephen, Deacon and Martyr; John, Apostle and Evangelist;* and we pray that we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom.

Silence

Reader: Lord in your mercy

People: Hear our prayer.

Reader: Almighty God, in giving us dominion over things on earth,

People: you made us fellow workers in your creation:

Reader: Give us wisdom and reverence so to use the resources of nature,

People: that no one may suffer from our abuse of them,

Reader: and that generations yet to come may continue

People: to praise you for your bounty;

Reader: through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

Confession and Absolution

BCP 360

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

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. **Amen.**

The Peace *All stand.*

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

People: And also with you.

Announcements

HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Sentence

Celebrant: Through Christ let us continually offer to God the sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his Name. But do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. [Hebrews 13:15, 16]

Offertory Hymn

Jesus! Name of wondrous love!

Hymnal # 252

Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer A

BCP 361

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:

Sanctus *Holy, holy, holy*

LEVAS II # 255

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly

ho - ly Lord God of hosts.
 Heav - en and earth are filled with your glo -
 ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed is He who comes in the name
 of the Lord, of the Lord.
 Ho - san - na in the high -
 est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

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:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in his 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. **AMEN!**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us 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 for ever. Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Communion Music

Improvisation

Michael Mulder

Postcommunion Prayer

BCP 365

Celebrant: Let us pray.

**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.**

Advent Blessing

Celebrant: May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn

Soon and very soon

LEVAS #14

Dismissal

Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

People: Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Postlude

Postlude by J.S Bach

Michael Mulder



Joseph: In the face of circumstances that distressed even a man of such tenderness and obedience to God as Joseph, he accepted the vocation of protecting Mary and being a father to Jesus. He is honored in Christian tradition for the nurturing care and protection he provided for the infant Jesus and his mother in taking them to Egypt to escape Herod's slaughter of the innocents, and in rearing him as a faithful Jew at Nazareth. The Gospel according to Matthew pictures Joseph as a man of deep devotion, open to mystical experiences, and as a man of compassion, who accepted his God-given responsibility with gentleness and humility. Joseph was a pious Jew, a descendant of David, and a carpenter by trade. As Joseph the Carpenter, he is considered the patron saint of the working man, one who not only worked with his hands, but taught his trade to Jesus. The little that is told of him is a testimony to the trust in God which values simple everyday duties, and gives an example of a loving husband and father. [*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*]

Continuing Prayer List

Sara, Pam P., Biran S., Kate C., Kristin and Gizzi Family, Robert and family, Morgan, Susan and Dan S., St. Luke's Haiti, Lee, Barry, Ben, Will and family, John R., Rebecca, Teddy and Jeff, Vince, Ann B., Joyce and Douglas K., Betsy, Mike Marshall and family, John W. and Susan, Thomas, Jeanette, Dean W., Rachel D., Matilda, Walter and family, Eileen, Sister CG, Jackie A., Abdul and Mohammed, Joanne and Marie, Mazza family, Robert, Celia, Felix, Sue, Ewa, Jeannie and Margaret, Ross, Abu, Carmine S., Liv C.



- December 24:** Christmas Eve; Holy Eucharist service at 4 pm
December 28: Christmas 1: Morning Prayer II service at 10 am
January 4: *The Epiphany*; **Holy Eucharist service at 10 am**
January 11: *First Sunday after the Epiphany: Baptism of Our Lord*; **Holy Eucharist at 10 am**
January 18: *Second Sunday after the Epiphany*; **Holy Eucharist service at 10 am**
January 25: *Third Sunday after the Epiphany*; **Holy Eucharist service at 10 am**



Please put your envelopes with donations for Christmas flowers in the offering plate today to ensure that they will be listed in the worship guide on Christmas Eve.