



**Fourth Sunday of Advent**  
HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II  
YEAR C

**December 22, 2024**

**10:00 a.m.**

YOU  
*welcomed*  
ME

## ADVENT

Advent is a season of preparation: shopping for gifts, decorating our homes and sanctuaries. Advent is also a time to prepare our hearts and communities for the coming of Christ, the Almighty God who came among us poor and homeless, a stranger and a child. There may be no better time to reflect on how we as the Episcopal Church embrace the Holy One who continues to draw near in the neighbor, the stranger, the refugee, or the one who seems most “other” to you. It is the ideal season to commit to becoming Beloved Community.

## ABOUT THE ADVENT WREATH LITURGY

The Advent wreath is believed to have originated with a Lutheran pastor working among the poor in Germany in the late 1800s. Tradition states that the children would ask every day if Christmas had arrived, so he arranged candles (four large candles for the weeks and then smaller ones for the days) to help the children mark time and journey with Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem without leaving Germany. The wreath came to appear as it does today through the adoption of the practice by German Catholics, who decreased the wreath to just the candles we use today. Different traditions attribute different meanings to the candles, and even use different colors, but the purpose remains the same: to provide Christians with a way of marking time through the season of anticipation until we reach the birth of Jesus. For some, the wreath is a visual pilgrimage through Advent, similar to the idea behind the recreation of the creche in churches and homes started by St. Francis of Assisi as a way of helping the poor experience holy sites from home. For many... the lighting the Advent wreath will serve as a method for journeying with Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem.

*Source of the above descriptions and following wreath liturgy: Preparing to Become the Beloved Community, Year A <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/09/EN-Preparing-to-Become-the-Beloved-Community-Year-A.pdf>*

**THE HOLY EUCHARIST**  
*from Enriching our Worship (EOW) 1*

Prelude

Jeanie Park

**Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

**Reader:** The first three candles we lit were for hope, peace, and joy. Today we light the fourth candle—the candle of LOVE. With this flame we signify the love of God that surrounds and fills us at all time, but that we recognize in a special way in the Christmas story. There is no greater power than LOVE. It is stronger than rulers and empires, stronger than grief or despair, stronger than even death. We love, because God LOVES us. No exceptions.

*The fourth candle is lighted.*

**Reader:** Loving God, we open ourselves to you this Christmas season. Light our lives with your imagination.

**All:** Show us the creative power of hope. Teach us the peace that comes from justice. Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared. Magnify your LOVE within us. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you that we may walk in the light of Christ.

**Reader:** Let us practice peace and take with us a knowledge that God is always coming into the world. May we seek God not in a long ago stable or ancient manger, but in the people we meet and the depths of our own hearts. May the blessing of Christmas make each of us a blessing to others. God forth in hope, peace, joy, and love. **Amen.**

Introit Hymn

O come, O come, Emmanuel  
verses 7 and 8

Hymnal 56

7 O come, Desire of nations, bind  
in one the hearts of all mankind;  
bid thou our sad divisions cease,  
and be thyself our King of Peace.

*Refrain Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel!*

8 O come, O come, Emmanuel  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lowly exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

*Refrain*

*A period of silence follows.*

### Opening Sentence

*Please stand as you are able.*

Show, O heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness; let the earth open, that salvation may spring up, and let it cause righteousness to sprout up also. *Isaiah 45:8*

Processional Hymn

Come thou long expected Jesus

Hymnal 66

### The Word of God

#### Opening Acclamation

*Please remain standing.*

*Celebrant:* Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

**People:** You come to your people and set them free.

## The Trisagion

Hymnal S102

*Sung 3 times*

Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and Might - y,

Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One, Have mer - cy up - on us.

## Salutation

*Celebrant:* God be with you.

**People:** And also with you.

*Celebrant:* Let us pray.

## Collect

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## The First Lesson

*Micah 5:2-5a*

You, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

### **Psalm 80:1-7**

*Said responsively by whole verse.*

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.

### **The Second Lesson**

*Hebrews 10:5-10*

When Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,  
but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)."

When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

*All stand when those on the altar stand.*

Sequence Hymn

O day of peace that dimly shines

Hymnal 597

The Gospel

*Luke 1:39-45(46-55)*

Reader: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

**People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

[And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."]

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

## The Sermon

The Reverend Dina E. Widlake

*A brief silence follows the sermon.*

## 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.

## The Prayers of the People

*Please stand as able.*

Response: Merciful God, receive our prayer.

## Closing Collect (*Celebrant*)

## Confession

Let us confess our sins to God.

God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.



*Celebrant:* Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

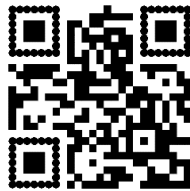
## The Peace

## Welcome and Announcements

*Congregation may be seated.*

*We are deeply grateful for your generosity in giving. Please consider giving.*

*Give by Text:* Text EEC to 73256 or use the QR Code:



*Give Online:* [EpiphanyEC.org/give](https://EpiphanyEC.org/give)

*Mail a check:* Epiphany Episcopal Church, 3301 Hidden Meadow Dr., Oak Hill, VA 20171

## The Holy Communion

Offertory Anthem                      O magnify the Lord with me                      Stan Pethel  
*Epiphany Choir and Joyful Noise Children's Choir*

*O magnify the Lord with me, let us rejoice and sing together.  
Praise the Lord for He is good, blessed are those who trust in him.  
The Lord is with us in sorrow; the Lord is with us in joy.  
He gives us every tomorrow. Come praise His name and rejoice!*

*The congregation stands when the offerings are being presented.*

Presentation Hymn                      Doxology                      Hymnal 380, verse 3

**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.**

## Enriching Our Worship

## Prayer 2

*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 our thanks and praise.

*Celebrant:* We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready the creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing. You made us in your image, and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away; and yet, as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love. And so this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we sing:

*Celebrant and People*

### Sanctus

Craig Phillips

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,  
God of pow - er and might, heaven and earth are  
full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the  
high - est. Blessed is the One who comes in the  
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*Celebrant continues*

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God. To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love. Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice.

Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new creation, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made. In the fullness of time bring us, with all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **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/Fraction

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

### Fraction Anthem

Craig Phillips

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sins of the world: have  
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sins of the  
world: have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the  
sins of the world: grant us peace, grant us peace.

### The Invitation

*Celebrant:* The gifts of God

*People:* We are the people of God

*Celebrant:* Behold who you are, become what you receive. **Amen.**

*If you prefer to receive a blessing when you come, signal by crossing your arms across your chest. If you require a gluten free wafer, indicate that when you come forward. If you want to know more about the connection between Communion and Baptism, we welcome your questions!*

Communion Hymn

Ye who claim the faith of Jesus

Hymnal 268

### The Post-communion Prayer

*Celebrant:* Let us pray.

*Celebrant and People:*

Loving God, we give you thanks for restoring us in your image and nourishing us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood. Now send us forth a people, forgiven, healed, renewed; that we may proclaim your love to the world and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

## The Blessing

*Celebrant offers words of blessing.*

People: Amen.

Recessional Hymn

Savior of the nations, come

Hymnal 54

## The Dismissal

Response: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Jeanie Park

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**christmas**  
SERVICE SCHEDULE

**CHRISTMAS EVE**  
**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24**  
4:00 p.m. - Traditional Christmas Eve Service  
Young-family Friendly

9:00 p.m. - Traditional Christmas Eve  
With a musical prelude at 8:40 p.m. and Guest Harpist

**CHRISTMAS DAY**  
**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25**  
10:00 a.m. - Said Christmas Day Service with  
Holy Communion

# Life of Epiphany

To find out more, go to <https://EpiphanyEC.org>

## TODAY AT EPIPHANY

December 22 Sunday Sing for Youth and Adults, 9:15 AM (Room 120)

December 22 Sunday Worship with Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10 AM (Nave and Online)

December 22 Blue Christmas & Advent Solace, 7 PM (Nave)

## THIS WEEK AT EPIPHANY

December 23 Parish Life Meeting, 7 PM (Zoom)

December 24 Christmas Carol Sing-along, 3:45 PM (Nave)

December 24 Youth-Focused Christmas Eve, Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 4 PM (Nave)

December 24 Musical Prelude, 8:40 PM (Nave)

December 24 Traditional Christmas Eve, Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 9 PM (Nave and Online)

December 25 Christmas Day, Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10 AM (Nave)

December 26 Office Closed

## LOOKING AHEAD

December 29 Sunday Worship with Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10 AM (Nave)

January 1 Happy New Year! Church Office closed.

*See the eNews for the most up-to-date information about the Life of Epiphany.*

*Not on our list? Go to <https://EpiphanyEC.org> and sign-up today!*

## **Special Service: Blue Christmas & Advent Solace**

**December 22, 2024 ~ 7pm**

Christmas is filled with joy and wonder - and for some, pain and grief. This may be the first Christmas without a loved one or other loss. Perhaps this time of year has always been difficult for you. If you have served the hypothermia shelter at Epiphany, you may have seen firsthand how this season and its days are just days in a long run of difficult days. Come and receive healing and peace for yourself or on behalf of others, through prayers, scripture, and meditation that acknowledge that God's presence is for those who struggle, mourn and experience the complexity of pain and joy.

## Welcome Guests and Visitors

*And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:13).*

We have been blessed by your presence with us in worship and hope you have felt blessed by your time with us. However strong or tender your faith, hope, and love are, you have an open invitation to join us. We hope to have a chance to get to know you. If you complete a newcomer's welcome card (located in the chair rack in front of you), you can place it in the offertory plate or give it to the clergy as you leave. Alternatively, you can call or email us: 703-466-5200, [clergy@EpiphanyEC.org](mailto:clergy@EpiphanyEC.org)



*Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7).*

*Please pray for: Alan; Allen; Brian & Eddie; Carolyn & Family; Clara & Clyde; Danny; Dana & Family; Danny; Dick; Dinah & Bob; Ellie & Family; Fred & Hillary; Hazel & Family; Hesham (Sam) & Family; James & Family; Jim; John; Joshua; Kaitlyn; Kay; Laura & Bob; Lima Family; Maddi & Family; Maria; Mary; Moya; Nadia & Family; Patty, Mark & Brian; Paul & Linda; Penny; Rick & Sherry; Roy & Mickey; Ruth & Family; Sara & Family; Steve, Miranda & Family; and Kyle, Anna, Mary Clare, & Sophia.*

*Names remain on the prayer list for 6 weeks. Please contact [prayers@EpiphanyEC.org](mailto:prayers@EpiphanyEC.org) if they can be removed sooner or if they need to be added again.*

As part of the Virginia Diocesan Cycle of Prayer, this week we pray for ***St. Matthew's Richmond***. We at Epiphany pray each week also for those who have suffered hurt and loss; who grieve and are impacted by any illness of body, mind, and spirit. We pray for all who suffer or spread violence of any kind. We pray for those that know food insecurity, homeless and experience natural disasters. We pray for those who cannot safely practice their faith in freedom and suffer oppression of any kind. And we pray for those beginning new lives in new communities; may they be welcomed warmly and supported well.

The ministries and ministers of the Church are supported by the vestry, clergy, and staff of this parish.

Rector *The Rev. Dina Widlake*

Parish Administrator

Children, Youth and Family Minister

Minister of Music

Principal Musician

Bookkeeper

*Liz Whitlock*

*Dana Hale*

*Cathy Lard*

*Jeanie Park*

*Di Hannum*

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**Epiphany Episcopal Church is building a Christ-centered community, growing in God's grace, welcoming all in love, and providing for God's world.**

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