

**Advent Lessons and Carols Service & Family Christmas Pageant**  
**December 17, 2023 @ 10am**



**Opening Hymn: (WLP) 889 – *The Song of Zechariah***

**A Bidding Prayer**

Dear People of God: In the season of Advent, it is our responsibility and joy to prepare ourselves to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us look forward to the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in this city.

And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore.

And now, to gather all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying:

*The Lord's Prayer...*

**Officiant**

The Almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above, may the King of Angels bring us all. **Amen.**

## **1<sup>st</sup> Lesson: Isaiah 11:1-9 (GNT)**

The royal line of David is like a tree that has been cut down; but just as new branches sprout from a stump, so a new king will arise from among David's descendants.

The spirit of the Lord will give him wisdom and the knowledge and skill to rule his people.

He will know the Lord's will and honor him, and find pleasure in obeying him.

He will not judge by appearance or hearsay; he will judge the poor fairly and defend the rights of the helpless. At his command the people will be punished, and evil persons will die.

He will rule his people with justice and integrity.

Wolves and sheep will live together in peace, and leopards will lie down with young goats.

Calves and lion cubs will feed together, and little children will take care of them.

Cows and bears will eat together, and their calves and cubs will lie down in peace.

Lions will eat straw as cattle do. Even a baby will not be harmed if it plays near a poisonous snake.

On Zion, God's sacred hill, there will be nothing harmful or evil.

The land will be as full of knowledge of the Lord as the seas are full of water.

**Hymn: (H) 68 - *Rejoice, rejoice, believers***

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Lesson: Isaiah 40:1-11 (GNT)**

Comfort my people," says our God. "Comfort them!

Encourage the people of Jerusalem.

Tell them they have suffered long enough and their sins are now forgiven.

I have punished them in full for all their sins."

A voice cries out, "Prepare in the wilderness a road for the Lord!

Clear the way in the desert for our God! Fill every valley; level every mountain.

The hills will become a plain, and the rough country will be made smooth.

Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it.

The Lord himself has promised this."

A voice cries out, "Proclaim a message!" "What message shall I proclaim?" I ask.

"Proclaim that all human beings are like grass; they last no longer than wild flowers.

Grass withers and flowers fade when the Lord sends the wind blowing over them. People are no more enduring than grass. Yes, grass withers and flowers fade, but the word of our God endures forever."

Jerusalem, go up on a high mountain and proclaim the good news! Call out with a loud voice, Zion; announce the good news! Speak out and do not be afraid. Tell the towns of Judah that their God is coming!

The Sovereign Lord is coming to rule with power, bringing with him the people he has rescued. He will take care of his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs together and carry them in his arms; he will gently lead their mothers.

**Hymn: (H) 65** - *Prepare the way, O Zion*

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Lesson: Isaiah 7:10-15 (GNT)**

The Lord sent another message to Ahaz: “Ask the Lord your God to give you a sign. It can be from deep in the world of the dead or from high up in heaven.”

Ahaz answered, “I will not ask for a sign. I refuse to put the Lord to the test.”

To that Isaiah replied, “Listen, now, descendants of King David. It's bad enough for you to wear out the patience of people—do you have to wear out God's patience too? Well then, the Lord himself will give you a sign: a young woman who is pregnant will have a son and will name him ‘Immanuel.’ By the time he is old enough to make his own decisions, people will be drinking milk and eating honey.

**Hymn: (H) 66** – *Come, thou long expected Jesus*

### **4<sup>th</sup> Lesson: Matthew 1:18-23 (GNT)**

This was how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. His mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they were married, she found out that she was going to have a baby by the Holy Spirit. Joseph was a man who always did what was right, but he did not want to disgrace Mary publicly; so he made plans to break the engagement privately. While he was thinking about this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary to be your wife. For it is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived. She will have a son, and you will name him Jesus—because he will save his people from their sins.”

Now all this happened in order to make come true what the Lord had said through the prophet, “A virgin will become pregnant and have a son, and he will be called Immanuel” (which means, “God is with us”).

**Hymn: (H) 56** - *O come, O come Emmanuel – (vs 1)*

## **Children's Christmas Pageant**

*Hymns during the pageant:*

### **\*O little town of Bethlehem - The Hymnal 1982, #79 – vs 1**

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, the silent stars go by;  
yet in thy dark streets shineth, the everlasting Light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years, are met in thee tonight.

### **\*Once in Royal David's City – The Hymnal 1982, #102 – vs 1**

Once in royal David's city, stood a lowly cattle shed,  
Where a mother laid her baby, in a manger for His bed:  
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ, her little Child.

### **\*Away in a manger – The Hymnal 1982, #101 – vs 1**

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

### **\*While shepherds watched their flocks by night – The Hymnal 1982, #94 – vs 1**

While shepherds watched their flocks by night, all seated on the ground  
The angel of the Lord came down, and glory shone around.

### **\*We three kings – The Hymnal 1982, #128 – vs 1**

We three kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.  
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright;  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

### **\*As with gladness – The Hymnal 1982, #119 – vs 1**

As with gladness men of old, did the guiding star behold;  
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;  
so, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led to thee.

## **The Peace**

**The Offertory/Hymn: (H) 437 – Tell Out My Soul**

***Birthdays, additional prayers, thanksgivings...***

**Closing Prayer**

**Benediction/Blessing**

**Closing Hymn: (VF) 34 - People, look East**

- 1 People, look East. The time is near  
of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able,  
trim the hearth and set the table.  
*People, look East and sing today:*  
*Love the guest is on the way.*
- 2 Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,  
one more seed is planted there:  
give up your strength the seed to nourish,  
that in course the flow'r may flourish. *Refrain*
- 3 Birds, though you long have ceased to build,  
guard the nest that must be filled.  
Even the hour when wings are frozen,  
God for fledging time has chosen. *Refrain*
- 4 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim,  
one more light the bowl shall brim,  
shining beyond the frosty weather,  
bright as sun and moon together. *Refrain*
- 5 Angels, announce with shouts of mirth,  
Christ who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming,  
with the word, the Lord is coming. *Refrain*

**Pearl of the Week**

Soften our hearts and open our ears, Lord. Help us return to welcome and wonder, give us your blessing as we bless others, and bring us again to your loving embrace. Amen

*The Rt. Rev. Carol Gallagher*

## **Prayers for the Universal Church**

- \*Pray for the Diocese of Ikwerre (*Nigeria*)
- \* St Matthew's Mission, Beaver, AK
- \*Our companion congregations of Epiphany Church in Kivalina & St. Philip's in Wrangell
- \*In our parish: Lisa, Linda, Ruth Ann, Peter

## **Announcements**

- \*TODAY: Dec 17: Holy Communion at 8am  
Advent Lessons & Carols, Family Pageant at 10am
- \*Dec 24: 4 Advent HE Service at 8am (*in person*)
- \*Dec 24: Christmas Eve Service @ 6pm (*pre-service music from 6-6:30pm*) – Service begins at 6:30pm (*in person/zoom*)
- \*Dec 25: Christmas Day @ 10am (*in person/zoom*)
- \*Mondays @ 6:00pm – Young Life (*See House*) – *on break during holidays*
- \*Wednesdays: 10am-11am: Child & Family Community Playgroup: *for families with children ages 0 - 3/hosted by Early Learning Program (in the See House)*
- \*We collect lakeside grocery receipts and non-perishable foods to support outreach ministries.

## **Those Serving Today – 10am – Advent Lessons & Carols/Family Christmas Pageant**

Acolyte	Elias Pfeiffer
1 <sup>st</sup> reading	Marg Parsons
2 <sup>nd</sup> reading	Loyd Platson
3 <sup>rd</sup> reading	Nancy Jo Bleier
4 <sup>th</sup> reading	Cheri Hample
Prayers	Kit Allgood-Mellema/Julie
Officiant	Kit Allgood-Mellema

St Peter's by the Sea Episcopal Church  
611 Lincoln St./P.O. Box 1130 Sitka, Alaska 99835  
(907) 747-3977; [stpetersbytheseak@gmail.com](mailto:stpetersbytheseak@gmail.com); [stpeters-sitka.org](http://stpeters-sitka.org)