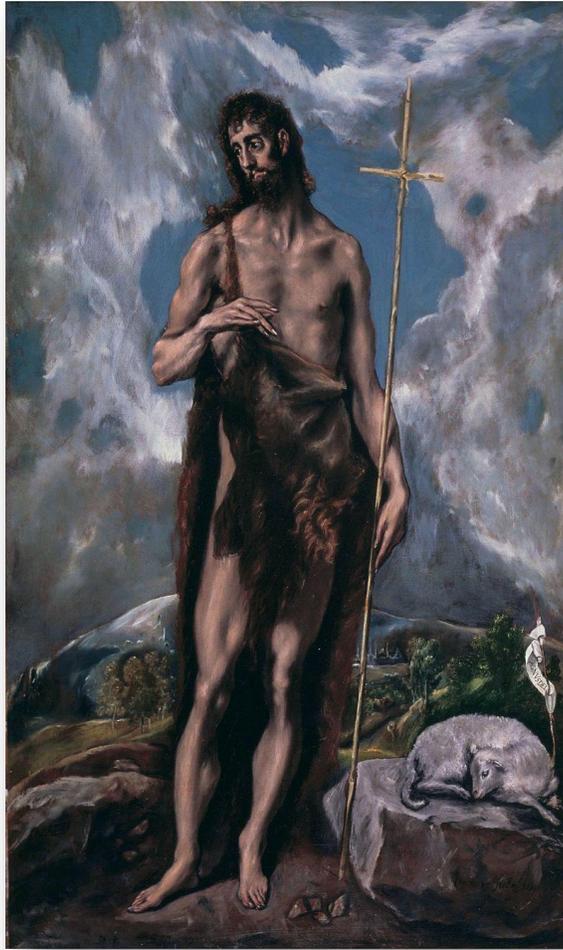


**The Second Sunday of Advent**  
**December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.**



**Sunday Services**

8:00 A.M. - Holy Eucharist, Rite I  
9:00 A.M. – Holy Eucharist, Rite II  
11:00 A.M. – Morning Prayer, Rite I  
Holy Eucharist, Rite I  
(1st Sunday of each month)

**Weekday Services**

**Monday – Friday**

7:30 A.M. – Morning Prayer, Rite I  
6:00 P.M. – Evening Prayer, Rite I

# The Second Sunday of Advent

December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

## Opening Hymn 76

### *On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry*

1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an -  
2 Then cleansed be ev - ery breast from sin; make  
3 For thou art our sal - va - tion, Lord, our  
4 To heal the sick stretch out thine hand, and  
5 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to thee, whose

1 noun - ces that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,  
2 straight the way for God with - in, and let each heart pre -  
3 re - fuge, and our great re - ward; with - out thy grace we  
4 bid the fall - en sin - ner stand; shine forth, and let thy  
5 ad - vent doth thy peo - ple free; whom with the Fa - ther

1 for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings.  
2 pare a home where such a might - y guest may come.  
3 waste a - way like flowers that with - er and de - cay.  
4 light re - store earth's own true love - li - ness once more.  
5 we a - dore and Ho - ly Spi - rit ev - er - more.

## Opening Acclamation

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

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

## The Collect of Purity

*The Celebrant says*

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid:

Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

# The Second Sunday of Advent

## December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

### Kyrie

*Celebrant* Lord, have mercy upon us.  
*People* **Christ, have mercy upon us.**  
*Celebrant* Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Officiant* The Lord be with you.  
*People* **And with thy spirit.**  
*Officiant* Let us pray.

### The Collect

Merciful God, who sent thy 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 liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## The Liturgy of the Word

### First Reading

*Malachi 3:1-4*

A Reading from the Book of the prophet Malachi

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight-- indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

The word of the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

### The Song of Zechariah

*Benedictus Dominus Deus*

*Luke 1: 68-79*

**68 Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; \*  
he has come to his people and set them free.**

# The Second Sunday of Advent

## December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

69 He has raised up for us a mighty savior, \*  
born of the house of his servant David.

70 Through his holy prophets he promised of old,  
that he would save us from our enemies, \*  
from the hands of all who hate us.

71 He promised to show mercy to our fathers \*  
and to remember his holy covenant.

72 This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, \*  
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

73 Free to worship him without fear, \*  
holy and righteous in his sight  
all the days of our life.

74 You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, \*  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

75 To give his people knowledge of salvation \*  
by the forgiveness of their sins.

76 In the tender compassion of our God \*  
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

77 To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, \*  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

### Second Reading

*Philippians 1:3-11*

A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

The Word of the Lord

*People*

**Thanks be to God**

# The Second Sunday of Advent

December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

## Gospel Hymn 65

## *Prepare the Way, O Zion*



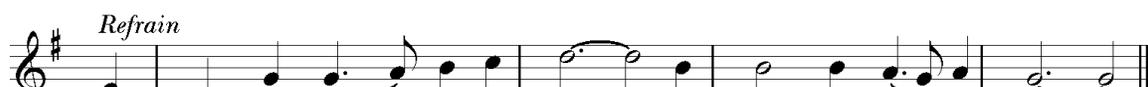
1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!  
2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.  
3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sa - vior's rule em - brace.



Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.  
His rule is peace and free - dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.  
His tid - ings of sal - va - tion pro - claim in ev - ery place.



Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.  
Lift high your praise re - sound - ing, for grace and joy a - bound - ing.  
All lands will bow be - fore him, their voic - es will a - dore him.



Oh, blest is Christ that came in God's most ho - ly name.

## The Gospel

## *Luke 3:1-6*

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

*People:* **Glory be to Thee, O Lord.**

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight.

# The Second Sunday of Advent

## December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

Every valley shall be filled,  
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,  
  
and the crooked shall be made straight,  
and the rough ways made smooth;  
  
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

*Celebrant* The Gospel of the Lord.

*People* Praised be to Thee, O Christ.

**The Sermon**

**The Rev'd W. Patrick Edwards**

### **Nicene Creed**

**I believe in one God,**  
    **the Father Almighty,**  
    **maker of heaven and earth,**  
    **and of all things visible and invisible;**  
**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,**  
    **the only-begotten Son of God,**  
    **begotten of his Father before all worlds,**  
    **God of God, Light of Light,**  
    **very God of very God,**  
    **begotten, not made,**  
    **being of one substance with the Father;**  
    **by whom all things were made;**  
    **who for us men and for our salvation**  
    **came down from heaven,**  
    **and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,**  
    **and was made man;**  
    **and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;**  
    **he suffered and was buried;**  
    **and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,**  
    **and ascended into heaven,**  
    **and sitteth on the right hand of the Father;**  
    **and he shall come again, with glory,**  
    **to judge both the quick and the dead;**  
    **whose kingdom shall have no end.**  
**And I believe in the Holy Ghost the Lord, and Giver of Life,**  
    **who proceedeth from the Father and the Son;**  
    **who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped**  
    **and glorified;**  
    **who spake by the Prophets.**  
**And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church;**  
**I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins;**

# The Second Sunday of Advent

## December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

**and I look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

### The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church and the world

Almighty and everliving God, who in thy holy Word hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks for all men: Receive these our prayers which we offer unto thy divine Majesty, beseeching thee to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord; and grant that all those who do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live in unity and godly love.

Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops and other ministers, especially Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael; our Presiding Bishop, and Lawrence; Bishop of Long Island, that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments.

And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace, and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy Word, truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.

We beseech thee also so to rule the hearts of those who bear the authority of government in this and every land, especially Joseph, our President; Kathy, Our Governor, and Jesse our Mayor, that they may be led to wise decisions and right actions for the welfare and peace of the world.

Open, O Lord, the eyes of all people to behold thy gracious hand in all thy works, that, rejoicing in thy whole creation, they may honor thee with their substance, and be faithful stewards of thy bounty.

And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succor all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

And we also bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear, beseeching thee to grant them continual growth in thy love and service; and to grant us grace so to follow the good examples of all thy saints, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom.

Grant these our prayers, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. **Amen.**

### The Confession of Sin

*Celebrant*

Ye who do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways: Draw near with faith, and make your humble confession to Almighty God, devoutly kneeling.

# The Second Sunday of Advent

## December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

*Celebrant and People*

**Almighty God,**  
**Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,**  
**maker of all things, judge of all men:**  
**We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins**  
**and wickedness,**  
**which we from time to time most grievously have committed,**  
**by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty,**  
**provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us.**  
**We do earnestly repent,**  
**and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings;**  
**the remembrance of them is grievous unto us,**  
**the burden of them is intolerable.**  
**Have mercy upon us,**  
**have mercy upon us, most merciful Father;**  
**for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,**  
**forgive us all that is past;**  
**and grant that we may ever hereafter**  
**serve and please thee in newness of life,**  
**to the honor and glory of thy Name;**  
**through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Celebrant*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### Comforting Sentences

#### The Peace

*Officiant*        The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People*            **And with thy spirit.**

*The Ministers and People greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

### The Liturgy of the Table

#### The Offertory

**All things come of Thee, O Lord, and of Thine own have we given Thee. Amen.**

#### The Great Thanksgiving

*Celebrant*        The Lord be with you.

*People*            **And with thy spirit.**

St. John's Episcopal Church | 100 South Main Street | P. O. Box 5068 | Southampton, New York 11969-5068

StJohnSouthampton.org | Facebook: StJohnSouthampton

# The Second Sunday of Advent

## December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.  
*People* **We lift them up unto the Lord.**  
*Celebrant* Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.  
*People* **It is meet and right so to do.**

*Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds*

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God. Because thou didst send thy 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 with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and singing,

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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*The people kneel or stand.*

*Then the Celebrant continues*

All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

## The Second Sunday of Advent

### December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **AMEN.**

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

### The Lord's Prayer

*Celebrant and people pray together.*

**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 Second Sunday of Advent

December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

## The Breaking of the Bread

*Celebrant and People*

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.  
Christ our Pass - o - ver is sac - ri - ficed for us;  
there - fore let us keep the feast.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## Agnus Dei

*Celebrant* O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,  
*People* **Have mercy upon us.**  
*Celebrant* O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,  
*People* **Have mercy upon us.**  
*Celebrant* O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,  
*People* **Grant us thy peace.**

## The Invitation to Communion

*Facing the people, the Celebrant may say the following Invitation*

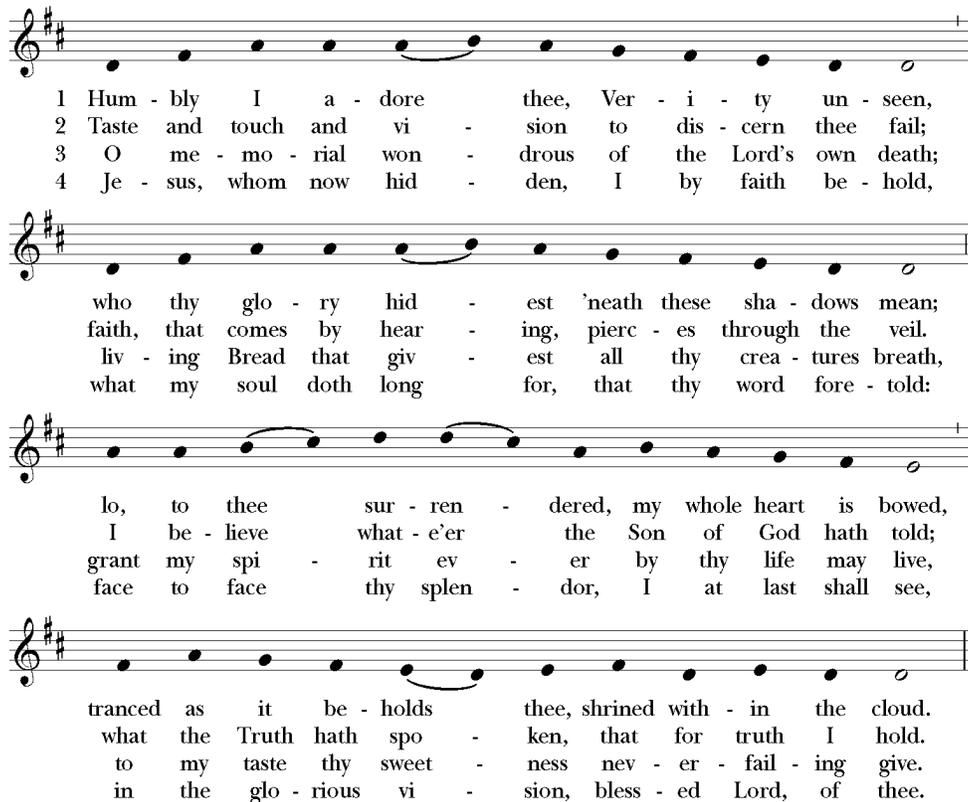
The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

# The Second Sunday of Advent

## December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

### Postcommunion Hymn 314

### *Humbly I adore thee*



1 Hum - bly I a - dore thee, Ver - i - ty un - seen,  
2 Taste and touch and vi - sion to dis - cern thee fail;  
3 O me - mo - rial won - drous of the Lord's own death;  
4 Je - sus, whom now hid - den, I by faith be - hold,  
who thy glo - ry hid - est 'neath these sha - dows mean;  
faith, that comes by hear - ing, pierc - es through the veil.  
liv - ing Bread that giv - est all thy crea - tures breath,  
what my soul doth long for, that thy word fore - told:  
lo, to thee sur - ren - dered, my whole heart is bowed,  
I be - lieve what - e'er the Son of God hath told;  
grant my spi - rit ev - er by thy life may live,  
face to face thy splen - dor, I at last shall see,  
tranced as it be - holds thee, shrined with - in the cloud.  
what the Truth hath spo - ken, that for truth I hold.  
to my taste thy sweet - ness nev - er - fail - ing give.  
in the glo - rious vi - sion, bless - ed Lord, of thee.

### The Postcommunion Prayer

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

### The Blessing

# The Second Sunday of Advent

December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

## Closing Hymn 67

## *Comfort, comfort ye my people*



1 Com - fort, com - fort ye my peo - ple, speak ye peace, thus  
2 Hark, the voice of one that cri - eth in the des - ert  
3 Make ye straight what long was crook - ed, make the rough - er



saith our God; com - fort those who sit in dark - ness  
far and near, call - ing us to new re - pent - ance  
pla - ces plain; let your hearts be true and hum - ble,



mourn - ing 'neath their sor - rows' load. Speak ye to Je -  
since the king - dom now is here. Oh, that warn - ing  
as be - fits his ho - ly reign. For the glo - ry



ru - sa - lem of the peace that waits for them;  
cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way;  
of the Lord now o'er earth is shed a - broad;



tell her that her sins I cov - er,  
let the val - leys rise to meet him  
and all flesh shall see the to - ken



and her war - fare now is o - ver.  
and the hills bow down to greet him.  
that the word is nev - er bro - ken.

## The Dismissal

*Celebrant* Let us bless the Lord.  
*People* Thanks be to God.

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The Second Sunday of Advent  
December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

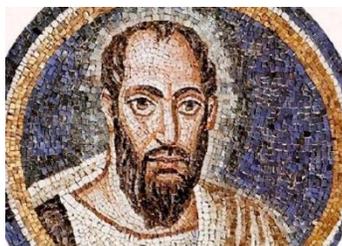


## *Dedications*

The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in memory of  
Derek James Roessle-Meerman by his Family.



## *Verse of the Week*



“I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.”

Philippians 1: 6

## *“Quote of the Week”*



“Death was not part of nature; it became part of nature. God did not decree death from the beginning; he prescribed it as a remedy. Human life was condemned because of sin to unremitting labour and unbearable sorrow and so began to experience the burden of wretchedness. There had to be a limit to its evils; death had to restore what life had forfeited. Without the assistance of grace, immortality is more of a burden than a blessing.”

St. Ambrose  
Bishop of Milan and theologian

**The Second Sunday of Advent**  
**December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.**

*Announcements*



**This year's Christmas Eve Children's Service will be held at 2:00 P.M. at St. Andrew's Dune Church. Interested families can contact Lisa Gillespie through email at [lisag0057@aol.com](mailto:lisag0057@aol.com).**

**Children of all ages are welcome. The littlest ones can play sheep or donkeys in the pageant.**

**Help us to maintain our prayer intercession list.**

The personal and collective intercessions we make asking our Lord to intercede in our lives and on behalf of others are a central aspect of our private and common worship. At St. John's we have always made an aural reading of our prayer list a part of our regular services. However, there comes with this an important responsibility to maintain it as current and accurate. To accomplish this we are asking our community to take that personal responsibility to heart in the following way:

We ask everyone to please let us know when someone should be added, removed, or otherwise amended on our prayer list. This is accomplished best by either dropping a note in the collection plate or by emailing or calling the parish secretary at (631) 283-0549 or at [secretary@stjohnsouthampton.org](mailto:secretary@stjohnsouthampton.org).

To avoid a name being orphaned on the prayer list names will be removed after 60 days of being added, unless the parish secretary is contacted to extend that time for another 60 days.

Of course, there is no limit to the number of persons we will faithfully include on our prayer list, nor a limit to the duration we will intercede on their behalf. This policy is to take special care in maintaining the names we bring before the Throne of Grace in prayer each time we gather together.

**The Second Sunday of Advent**  
**December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.**

**St. John's Episcopal Church**  
*Christmas Season Schedule*

Christmas Eve  
*St Andrew's Dune Church*  
2:00PM Children's Service and Pageant  
7:00PM Choral Holy Eucharist

*St John's Episcopal Church*  
9:00PM Holy Eucharist

Christmas Day  
10:00AM Holy Eucharist

The First Sunday after Christmas, Boxing Day  
8:00AM Morning Prayer and Sermon  
9:00AM Morning Prayer and Sermon  
11:00AM Morning Prayer and Sermon

Second Sunday after Christmas  
8:00AM Holy Eucharist  
9:00AM Holy Eucharist  
11:00AM Holy Eucharist

# The Second Sunday of Advent

## December 5, 2021 • 11:00 A.M.

In the Gospels, Christ, hearing of the imprisonment of Saint John the Baptist, honors him. “Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist.” Yet, in the Gospel according to Saint John, when learning that Christ is rising in the esteem and excitement of the people eclipsing him, John the Baptist says, “Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.”

John is prominently mentioned in the contemporary history of the Jews. The *Antiquities of the Jews* by Flavius Josephus barely mentions Christ, but John was described as a prophet who's message was universally accepted and his virtue made his martyrdom a cause of God's judgement against Herod.

It is the prophetic identity and ministry of John the Baptist that fit the expectations of people and historians in the world he knew, and this made his impact more significant for his peers. But in the centuries since then he has diminished just as Christ has increased. What has changed?

As Christ said immediately after praising him above, “the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” Surely John is a member of the Kingdom of God, but what He means here is that the life of the Christian is greater than the life of even the greatest of Israel's prophets.

Prophets are called to be the mouthpieces of God, empowered by the Holy Spirit for a moment in time to speak God's words and judgement. They fulfill a role, and then disappear. But, the Christian is empowered by the Holy Spirit for not merely a role or moment, but to be changed. We are redeemed by Christ's sacrifice, we are promised eternal life by His resurrection, but through the agency of the Holy Spirit we become new people, perfected into the image and ministry of Christ, and adopted as children of God and inheritors into His kingdom.

When Christ descended to the Dead, among those whom He brought into paradise was John the Baptist. John, like the Blessed Virgin Mary, needed Christ's redemption and resurrection to enter into the Kingdom of God.

John could only prophesy in his earthly ministry to Christ, but with us now he can join Christ in His eternal priesthood and share in the kingdom of God. There could be no greater man born of woman, but, we and John, born by water and the Spirit, aspire to so much more.

***For Pastoral Emergencies, please contact Fr. Patrick at 404-660-3592.***

Cover: *John the Baptist in the wilderness* by El Greco in the Legion of Honor Museum, San Francisco

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