



St. Timothy's Episcopal Church

3601 Alabama Ave SE Washington, DC 20020, Rector: Rev. Todd Thomas

December 15, 2024 – 3rd Sunday of Advent

***Our mission: Following Jesus by living in love,
walking by faith and serving our community.***

Welcome to all our guests, we're so glad you're here!

Welcome and gratitude to **Adam** for joining us this morning as our guest organist.

Prelude: Selected by the Organist

Opening Hymn: "Hark! A Thrilling Voice" H1982 #59 (vs. 1-5)

Verse 1. Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding. "Christ is nigh," it seems to say;
"Cast away the works of darkness, O ye children of the day."

Verse 2. Wakened by the solemn warning, from earth's bondage let us rise;
Christ, our sun, all sloth dispelling, shines upon the morning skies.

Verse 3. Lo! the Lamb, so long expected, comes with pardon down from heaven;
let us haste, with tears of sorrow, one and all to be forgiven;

Verse 4. So when next he comes with glory, and the world is wrapped in fear,
may he with his mercy shield us, and with words of love draw near.

Verse 5. Honor, glory, might, and blessing to the Father and the Son,
with the everlasting Spirit, while unending ages run.

CELEBRANT: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins

PEOPLE: **His mercy endures forever.**

CELEBRANT: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord.

PEOPLE: **Amen.**

Song of Praise, Lighting the Third Advent Candle:

"Come Thou Long Expected Jesus" H1982 #66 (vs. 1-3)

Verse 1. Come, thou long-expected Jesus born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.

Verse 2. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art:
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Verse 3. Born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king,
born to reign in us for ever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.

Prayer of the Day

CELEBRANT: The Lord be with you.

PEOPLE: **And also with you.**

CELEBRANT: Let us pray. 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.

PEOPLE: **Amen.**

Our Scripture Readings for the Day

A Reading from Zephaniah, Zephaniah 3:14-20

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The Lord has taken away the judgments against you; he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more.

On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: "Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will renew you[a] in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival."

I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

READER: The Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE:

Thanks be to God.

A Reading of Canticle 9, First Song of Isaiah

Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid.

**For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense,
and he will be my Savior.**

Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing
from the springs of salvation.

And on that day you shall say, give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name;

Make his deeds known among the peoples;
see that they remember that his Name is exalted.

**Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things,
and this is known in all the world.**

Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy,
for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

READER: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit

PEOPLE: **as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

A Reading from Philippians, Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious 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.

READER: The Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE:

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Hymn: "Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling" OLFB #387 (vs. 1-2 before)

Verse 1. Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, Calling for you and for me;
See, on the portals He's waiting and watching, Watching for you and for me.

Refrain: Come home, come home, Ye who are weary, come home;
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling, calling, "O sinner, come home!"

Verse 2. Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading, Pleading for you and for me?
Why should we linger and heed not His mercies, Mercies for you and for me?

The Gospel Reading: Luke 3:7-18

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CELEBRANT: The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Luke.

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

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." And the crowds asked him, "What, then, should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages." As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." So with many other exhortations he proclaimed the good news to the people.

READER: The Gospel of the Lord.

PEOPLE: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Gospel Acclamation "Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling" OLFB #387 (vs. 3-4 after)

Verse 3. Time is now fleeting, the moments are passing, Passing from you and from me;
Shadows are gathering, deathbeds are coming, Coming for you and for me.

Refrain: Come home, come home, Ye who are weary, come home;
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling, calling, "O sinner, come home!"

Verse 4. O for the wonderful love He has promised, Promised for you and for me;
Though we have sinned He has mercy and pardon, Pardon for you and for me.

The Sermon

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The Nicene Creed

ALL: **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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human.
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,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who 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.**

Prayers of the People

LEADER: Let us pray for the Church and for the world. Almighty God, help your people to seek truth, to live together in love, and to speak and act for peace in the world.

Lord, in your mercy:

PEOPLE ***Hear our prayer.***

LEADER: Help us to value one another, to honor one another, and to serve the common good. Lord, in your mercy:

PEOPLE: ***Hear our prayer.***

LEADER: Bless our neighbors who call this community their home, especially those in the area of Fairfax Village, Ashton Heights Apartments and Capitol Crossing Apartments. Lord, in your mercy:

PEOPLE: ***Hear our prayer.***

LEADER: Help us preserve and honor the earth, using natural resources wisely for our good and the good of all who will follow us. Lord, in your mercy:

PEOPLE: ***Hear our prayer.***

LEADER: We thank you, O God, that you blessed Carrie Mae and we can now take her name from our special prayer list. And we ask you to bless our families and friends who we now pause to name before you quietly and in our hearts.

Lord, in your mercy:

PEOPLE: ***Hear our prayer.***

LEADER: We lift to you those on our church prayer list, who need you at this time, especially Marsyl, Lillie, Fred B., Carmen, Shanice, Constance, Father Errol, Carroll, Bishop Paula, Willie, Callie, Tanya, Otis, Preston, Christine E., Calvin, Wilbert, Lisa, Delainey, Bob, Doris J., Edgar, Ernest, Kimberly, Virginia, Jean, Danny, Deborah, Ruby, Ted, Dorothy, James, Christine S., Herman S., Elfreda, Paul, Noah T., Delores, Susie, David, Rosa, Alice, Charles, Bernard, Cynthia, Donna, William, and Elaine. Lord, in your mercy:

PEOPLE: ***Hear our prayer.***

LEADER: We commend to your mercy all who have died, [especially] that your will for them may be fulfilled; and we pray that we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom. Lord, in your mercy:

PEOPLE: ***Hear our prayer.*** CELEBRANT closes the prayers. **PEOPLE: "Amen."**

The Confession

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

PEOPLE: **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 speaks the absolution.

PEOPLE: Amen.

Sharing the Peace

CELEBRANT: The peace of Christ be always with you.

PEOPLE: And also with you.

Announcements, Celebrations

Offering Our Gifts Back to God

Offertory Hymn: "Let Us Break Bread Together" LEVAS II #152 (vs. 1-2)

Verse 1. Let us break bread together on our knees; (on our knees)
Let us break bread together on our knees. (on our knees)

Refrain: When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
Oh Lord, have mercy on me.

Verse 2. Let us drink wine together on our knees; (on our knees)
Let us drink wine together on our knees. (on our knees)

Offertory Response "God Is So Good" LEVAS II #214 (vs.1-3)

Verse 1. God is so good, God is so good, God is so good, He's so good to me.

Verse 2. He cares for me, He cares for me, He cares for me, He's so good to me.

Verse 3. He's all I need, He's all I need, He's all I need, He's so good to me.

CELEBRANT: All things come from you, O Lord.

PEOPLE: And of your own have we given you.

Gathering in Gratitude at God's Table of Grace *Please stand as you are able.*

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 God thanks and praise.

CELEBRANT: CELEBRANT: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, God 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, saying:

CELEBRANT and PEOPLE:

Sanctus Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!

You're invited to kneel or sit at this point.

CELEBRANT: Holy and gracious God: 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 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."

CELEBRANT: Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

PEOPLE: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O God, in this 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 God, now and for ever.

PEOPLE: **AMEN.**

And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray, saying

CELEBRANT and PEOPLE:

**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.**

Breaking the Bread

CELEBRANT: Alleluia. Christ has given us the bread and cup of eternal life;

PEOPLE: **Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

CELEBRANT: These are the gifts of God for the people of God; all are called, and all are welcomed at God's Table of Grace. Receive as you are able, for God loves you.

All who seek a deeper walk with God are invited to participate. Please ask for a gluten-free wafer if needed.

Communion Hymn.

"My Lord, What a Morning"

LEVAS II #13 (vs. 1-3)

Refrain: My Lord, what a morning, My Lord, what a morning,
O my Lord, what a morning, When the stars begin to fall.

Verse 1. You'll hear the trumpet sound, To wake the nations underground,
Looking to my God's right hand, When the stars begin to fall.

Verse 2. You'll hear the sinner mourn, To wake the nations underground,
Looking to my God's right hand, When the stars begin to fall.

Verse 3. You'll hear the Christian shout, To wake the nations underground,
Looking to my God's right hand, When the stars begin to fall.

CELEBRANT: Let us all pray together with those online the prayer of spiritual communion.

PEOPLE: **My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Though I may not now be able to receive you in bread and wine from the altar, I invite you to live within my heart. I know you are with me; never let us be separated. Amen.**

CELEBRANT: And now let us pray. *Please stand as you are able.*

CELEBRANT and PEOPLE:

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.

Sending Prayer *Used to send forth Lay Eucharistic Visitors with consecrated gifts.*

CELEBRANT: We send you forth with these holy gifts to bless those who could not be with us today, but who still share our joy and hope in Christ.

PEOPLE: **Go also with our prayers to be a blessing to those we love.**

CELEBRANT: We are one Body as we share one Bread and one Cup.

PEOPLE: **Amen.**

The Blessing

Closing Hymn: "Joyful, Joyful We Adore" LEVAS II #14 (vs. 1-4)

Verse 1. Joyful, joyful, we adore You, God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before You, Op'ning to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; Drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness, Fill us with the light of day!

Verse 2. All Your works with joy surround You, Earth and heav'n reflect Your rays,
Stars and angels sing around You, Center of unbroken praise;
Field and forest, vale and mountain, Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird, and flowing fountain Praising You eternally!

Verse 3. Always giving and forgiving, Ever blessing, ever blest,
Well-spring of the joy of living, Ocean-depth of happy rest!
Loving Father, Christ our Brother, Let Your light upon us shine;
Teach us how to love each other, Lift us to the joy divine.

Verse 4. Mortals, join the mighty chorus, Which the morning stars began;
God's own love is reigning o'er us, Joining people hand in hand.
Ever singing, march we onward, Victors in the midst of strife;
Joyful music leads us sunward In the triumph song of life.

The Dismissal

CELEBRANT: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

PEOPLE: **Thanks be to God!**

Organ Voluntary: Selected by the Organist



WE ASK YOUR PRAYERS for our members who will celebrate birthdays and anniversaries this week.

We ask your prayers for our parishioners, relatives and friends.

Thank you to all who have helped prepare, lead, and participated in our worship!

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