THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 3, 2023  ♦  Holy Eucharist at 9 and 11 a.m.

St. John’s is a church for people of all races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, and viewpoints grounded in love. Whoever you are, we welcome you.

SAINT JOHN’S CHURCH
LAFAYETTE SQUARE • WASHINGTON, DC

St. John’s is a church for people of all races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, and viewpoints grounded in love. Whoever you are, we welcome you.
Welcome to St. John’s Church, Lafayette Square.
All are invited to participate in the service as able. Congregational responses appear in **bold**.
Nursery care is available from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on the second floor of the Parish House.

Prayer cards are provided at the entrance of the church. You are invited to write your prayers and place them in the collection plate. Your prayers will be blessed and will be prayed for by a priest during the week.

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**THE ADVENT WREATH**

As we await Christ’s Advent, or “coming,” we symbolically acknowledge the role of his birth in salvation history through the lighting of our Advent wreath. In the Bible, Christ is referred to as the “Light of the World,” contrasted with the darkness of sin. Each week in Advent, as the celebration of his birth draws nearer, we light another candle and dispel the darkness a little more. The candles may be said to represent hope, peace, joy, and love, just as they represent the four weeks of our wait. Thus, the Advent wreath helps us to contemplate spiritually the great drama that surrounds the birth of God Incarnate who comes to redeem the world.
INTROIT
Matin Responsory
Adapted from G.P. da Palestrina
(1525–1594)
Sung by the choir.
I look from afar: and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud covering the whole earth. Go ye out to meet him and say: Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel? High and low, rich and poor, one with another, Go ye out to meet him and say: Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadiest Joseph like a sheep, Tell us, art thou he that should come? Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and come to reign over thy people Israel. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
—Translated from the first responsory of Advent Sunday

HYMN 57
Lo! he comes, with clouds descending
Sung by all. Please stand as you are able as the procession enters.

1 Lo! he comes, with clouds descending, once for all
2 Every eye shall now behold him, robed in majesty
3 Those dear tokens of his passion still his dreadful majesty; those who set at naught and sold him, pierced, and nailed him to the cross;
4 Yea, amen! let all adore thee, high on thine eternal throne; Savior, take the train:

THE WORD OF GOD

Please remain standing as you are able.

Priest  Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People  And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

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. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

As the first candle of the Advent wreath is lit, the following prayer is said by all.

Holy and Gracious God, we pray that as we light this candle so, too, will a fire of Hope be kindled in our hearts. May we hold this Hope gently, as we are urged to stay awake and be ready for a most amazing event. As we prepare to receive the Christ Child, may we be ever mindful of our love for you, and yours for us. This will keep the flames of Hope burning in this Advent season. We pray all this in the name of Emmanuel. Amen.

TRISAGION (S-102)  Sung by all three times.

Alexander Archangelsky (1846–1924)

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Priest  The Lord be with you.
People  And also with you.
Priest  Let us pray.

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.
O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 80:1-7, 16-18

9 a.m. Led by Andrew Clarke, said responsively by half verse.
11 a.m. Chanted by the choir.

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

In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
    stir up your strength and come to help us.

Restore us, O God of hosts; *
    show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

O LORD God of hosts, *
    how long will you be angered
    despite the prayers of your people?

You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
    you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *
    and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

Restore us, O God of hosts; *
    show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
    the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.

And so will we never turn away from you; *
    give us life, that we may call upon your Name.

Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; *
    show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
(11 a.m. only) Children’s Chapel in the Parish House: All who wish may gather in front of the pulpit during the hymn and will return at the Peace. Parents are encouraged to accompany children younger than three.

GRADUAL HYMN 56

Sung by all, standing as you are able. Stanza 1 will be sung before the Gospel, stanza 2 after.

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel
2 O come, thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest

1 captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile
2 all things mightily; to us the path of knowledge

1 here until the Son of God appear.
2 show, and teach us in her ways to go. Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!


THE HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 13:24-37

Please remain standing as you are able.

Gospeller The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said, “In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come,
in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

Gospeller  The Gospel of the Lord.
People  Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Following the Gospel, all sing stanza 2 of the gradual hymn.

THE SERMON  

The Rev. Robert W. Fisher

THE NICENE CREED

Please stand as you are able.

Let us affirm our faith in the words of 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

9 a.m. Led by Riley Temple.

11 a.m. Led by David Gallalee.

Please stand or kneel as you are able.

Intercessor  Father, we pray for your holy catholic Church;
People  That we all may be one.

Intercessor  Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;
People  That your Name may be glorified by all people.

Intercessor  For the communities of St. John’s and our companion relationships with the Anglican Church of Southern Africa* and the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. In the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer, for St. Nicholas’ Parish, Germantown; Episcopal Church Women; and the United Thank Offering. For Michael, our Presiding Bishop, and Mariann, our Bishop; and for all bishops and other ministers, let us pray to the Lord.
People  That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

Intercessor  We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;
People  That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

* In particular, Kwasa College in the Diocese of the Highveld.
Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.
Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
That they may be delivered from their distress.
Give to the departed eternal rest;
Let light perpetual shine upon them.
We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.
Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.
Lord, hear the prayers of your people; and what we have asked faithfully, grant that we may obtain effectually, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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.

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 of the Lord be always with you.
The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.
THE HOLY COMMUNION
You may make an offering by placing your donation in the plate, or use this QR code to pay electronically. A donation via this code can only go to offerings and not to pledges or any other specific funds.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM
Sung by the choir.

At 9 a.m.  
People, look East  
arr. Barry Ferguson (b. 1942)

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.

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 flower may flourish.  
People, look East and sing today: Love, the Rose, is on the way.

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.  
People, look East and sing today: Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels, announce to man and beast him who cometh from the East.  
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look East and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way.

—Eleanor Farjeon (1881–1965)

At 11 a.m.  
Thou shalt know him when he comes  
Mark Sirett (b. 1952)

Thou shalt know him when he comes, not by any din of drums, nor his manners nor his airs, nor by anything he wears. Thou shalt know him when he comes, not by his crown or by his gown, but his coming known shall be by the holy harmony which his coming makes in thee. Thou shalt know him when he comes. Amen.

—Anonymous
HYMN 61

Standing as you are able.

1 “Sleep-ers, wake!” A voice a-stounds us, the

2 Zi-on hears the watch-men sing-ing; her

3 Lamb of God, the heavens a-dore you; let

shout of ram-part-guards sur-rounds us: “A-

heart with joyful hope is spring-ing, she

saints and angels sing be-fore you, as

wake, Je-ru-sa-lem, a-rise!” Mid-night’s peace their

wakes and hur-ries through the night. Forth he comes, her

harps and cym-bals swell the sound. Twelve great pearls, the

cry has bro-ken, their ur-gent summons clearly spo-

Bride-groom glo-rious in strength of grace, in truth vic-to-

ci-ty’s por-tals: through them we stream to join the im-mor-
ken: “The time has come, O maid - ens wise!
rious: her star is risen, her light grows bright.
tals as we with joy your throne sur - round.

Rise up, and give us light; the Bride - groom is in
Now come, most wor - thy Lord, God’s Son, In - car - nate
No eye has known the sight, no ear heard such de -
sight. Al - le - lu - ia! Your lamps pre - pare and
Word, Al - le - lu - ia! We fol - low all and
light: Al - le - lu - ia! There - fore we sing to

has - ten there, that you the wed - ding feast may share.”
heed your call to come in - to the ban - quet hall.
greet our King; for ev - er let our prais - es ring.

A PRAYER FOR STEWARDSHIP
Said by all.

Gracious and everlasting God, the giver of all good gifts, you have blessed us and our parish abundantly. Grant us the hope to dream and the courage to live into our possibilities. Make us faithful stewards, both for the provision of our necessities and for the relief of those who are in need. Bless the efforts of our annual giving this year to extend the work of spiritual renewal in our church and community of faith. Through Jesus Christ, who gave all of himself, we offer this prayer. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING
Please remain standing as you are able.

Priest The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.

Priest Lift up your hearts.
People We lift them to the Lord.

Priest Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People It is right to give God thanks and praise.

The priest continues

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. 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 (S-129) "SANCTUS (S-129)" Robert Powell (b. 1932)
Sung by all.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and
might, hea - ven and earth are full of your glory. 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.
We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, 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 all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

People We remember his death, we proclaim his resurrection, we await his coming in glory.

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all, presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with St. John and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

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.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

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

All 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 ANTHEM (S-163) Robert Powell

Sung by all.

Lamb of God, you take away the
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Priest  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.

All persons, including children, are welcome to receive Holy Communion with us. Wait for an usher to call your pew to come forward. You will first be handed a wafer by a priest (gluten-free wafers are available by request) and then offered wine by a lay server. You may either sip the wine or dip your wafer into the wine. Receiving the bread alone is a valid way to share in the Eucharist. Parents may decide if their children receive the bread and/or wine. All may instead signal their desire to be blessed by the priest by crossing their arms over their chest.

COMMUNION ANTHEM

Sung by the choir.

At 9 a.m.  Drop down, ye heavens, from above  Judith Weir (b. 1954)

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness.
Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people; my salvation shall not tarry.
I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions.
Fear not, for I will save thee; for I am the Lord thy God,
the holy one of Israel, thy redeemer.
Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness.

—From the Advent Prose

At 11 a.m.  Drop down, ye heavens, from above  Frederick Delius (1862–1934)

Drop down, ye heavens from above, and let the skies pour forth righteous.
Let the earth be fruitful and bring forth a savior.
We all fade as a leaf, like the wind taking us away.
You are my witness saith the Lord and my servant whom I have chosen.
That ye may know me and believe me.

—Adapted from the Advent Prose
HYMN 73

1 The King shall come when morning dawns and light triumphant breaks; when beauty gilds the eastern hills and life to joy awakes.

2 Not, as of old, a little child, to bear, and fight, and die, but crowned with glory like the sun that lights the morn ing sky.

3 The King shall come when morning dawns and earth’s dark night is past; O haste the rising of that morn, the day that e’er shall last;

4 and let the endless bliss begin, by weary saints foretold, when right shall triumph over wrong, and truth shall be extolled.

5 The King shall come when morning dawns and light and beauty brings: Hail, Christ the Lord! Thy people pray, come quickly, King of kings.

Sung by all, seated.

THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Please stand or kneel as you are able.

Priest Let us pray.

All Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

When scheduled, the Priest offers a communion kit to any Lay Eucharistic Minister doing a home visit, saying

On behalf of God and St. John’s Church, I send you forth bearing these holy gifts that those whom you will visit may share with us in the communion of Christ’s Body and Blood. Amen.

THE BLESSING

Priest Life is short. And we do not have too much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel the way with us. So be swift to love. Make haste to be kind. And the blessing of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

HYMN 59

Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding

Sung by all, standing as you are able.

1 Hark! a thril-ling voice is sound-ing; “Christ is nigh,” it seems to say;
2 Wak-ened by the sol- emn warn-ing, from earth’s bond-age let us rise;
3 Lo! the Lamb, so long ex-pect-ed, comes with par-don down from heaven;
4 so when next he comes with glo-ry, and the world is wrapped in fear,
5 Hon- or, glo-ry, might, and bless-ing to the Fa- ther and the Son,

1 “Cast a-way the works of dark-ness, O ye child-ren of the day.”
2 Christ, our sun, all sloth dis-pel-ling, shines up-on the morn-ing skies.
3 let us haste, with tears of sor-row, one and all to be for-given;
4 may he with his mer-cy shield us, and with words of love draw near.
5 with the ev-er-last-ing Spi-rit while un-end-ing a- ges run.

Words: Latin, ca. 6th cent.; tr. Hymns Ancient and Modern, 1861, alt. Music: Merton, William Henry Monk (1823-1889)
THE DISMISSAL

Priest Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

VOLUNTARY

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme
(Sleepers wake, a voice is calling) Johann Sebastian Bach
BWV 645
THE ADVENT FRONTAL ON THE ALTAR WAS GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD,
and in loving memory of Avedis Thomas Reid Jr., Joseph Browning Reid II, and Richmond Shackleton Reid.

THE GREENS IN THE CHURCH ARE GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD.

ASSISTING AT THE 9 A.M. SERVICE TODAY
Jack Reiffer, Crucifer • Diane Spaulding and Hilary West, Chalice Bearers
Jill Dowell, Assistant Head Usher • Autumn Brown and Martha Ellison, Ushers
     Kerri Stelcen and Susan Valaskovic, Greeters
     Joanne Hutton and Sherill Mason, Flower Guild

ASSISTING AT THE 11 A.M. SERVICE TODAY
Greg Morrison, Crucifer • Lizzie Rigby and Cooper Thesmar, Acolytes
Paul Barkett and Kevin Cordova-Brookey, Chalice Bearers
     Nora Rigby, Assistant Head Usher
Linda Chen, Doug Estes, John Herzog, and Marc Warren, Ushers
     Desirée Stolar and Marty Williams, Greeters
     Joanne Hutton and Sherill Mason, Flower Guild
     Jeremy Skog, Livestream Technician

Please help us be good stewards of the environment.
If you do not wish to take this bulletin home after the service,
you may leave it at the end of the pew as you depart or place it in a blue recycling bin.

ARE YOU NEW TO ST. JOHN’S?
Please let us know who you are and how we can best serve you by filling out a “Welcome” card and leaving it in the offering plate or with an usher or greeter. • Free valet parking is available on Sundays from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Look for the valet sign at the corner of Black Lives Matter Plaza (16th Street) and H Street, NW. • Follow us on Instagram at @stjohnschurchlafayettesquare. See photos from St. John’s musical performances, special events, meetings, Sunday services, and more. Relive the moment or experience it for the first time through the touch of a button on your smartphone.