

# St. John's Episcopal Church

## The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 22, 2013



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## **A Note on Today's Readings**

*The Fourth Sunday of Advent—Year A*

Welcome to our parish. On this final Sunday of preparation for the celebration of Christ's birth, the central figures are the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph. The Gospel reading is Matthew's account of Jesus' conception by the Holy Spirit and the Blessed Virgin. It is this Incarnation—becoming flesh—of God the Son that unites things earthly with things heavenly. In the quiet obedience of Joseph and Mary, we find the model for Christian living that enables us to be extensions of Christ's Incarnation.

In today's reading from Isaiah, the prophet foretells the birth of a child in a passage that the New Testament writers, especially Matthew, considered to be fulfilled in Jesus' birth from Mary.

Jesus' descent from David, his birth, his death and resurrection, are Paul's theme in the passage from Romans. That life, death, and resurrection are the source of our new life in Christ, and bring us the grace and power to live in faith and obedience.

The liturgy centers on the fact that God comes to us in and through the material world. He came in the flesh of a human mother and lived within a human family. He comes to us now in bread and wine. He comes to the world in our flesh as we live in faithful obedience to him. The pattern for that obedience is the Holy Family of Nazareth for whom we give thanks today.

# Holy Eucharist

**The Fourth Sunday of Advent**

Sunday, December 22, 2013

Celebrant      Our Advent journey is almost complete, and the Christ child will soon be here.

People          *As we light the fourth candle, we are reminded of the peace that only Christ can give.*

Reader        But 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. (Micah 5:2-5a)

People          *God's peace is meant for the whole of creation; together, we anticipate the day of his coming.*

Celebrant      God our Savior, you alone are the Prince of Peace who shall rule with justice and love. As we seek to be bearers of your peace in the world, may we find our security in your grace – and may we be sources of peace and safety to others. Amen.

## Liturgy of the Word

### Hymn

*People, look East*

WLP 724

*All standing, the Celebrant says*

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

*The Celebrant says*

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.*

*The following is sung, all standing*

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of two systems. The first system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are: "Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and Might - y, Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One, Have mer - cy up - on us." The piano accompaniment has a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line ends with a double bar line. The piano accompaniment ends with a double bar line.

## **Collect of the Day**

*Celebrant* God be with you.  
*People* And also with you.  
*Celebrant* Let us pray.

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

## **First Reading**

Isaiah 7:10-16

*All sit.*

A Reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

*Reader* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

*People* Thanks be to God.

## **Psalm**

*Remain seated.*

## **Psalm 80:1-7,16-18**

BCP p. 702

## **Second Reading**

Romans 1:1-7

A Reading from Paul's letter to the Church in Rome.

*Reader* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

*People* Thanks be to God.

## **Sequence**

*All stand.*

*O come, O come, Emmanuel* (v.7&8)

Hymnal 56

## **Holy Gospel**

Matthew 1:18-25

*All stand.*

*Priest* The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

*People* Glory to you, Lord Christ.

*After the Gospel is read, the people respond as follows:*

*Priest* The Gospel of the Lord.

*People* Praise to you, Lord Christ.

## **Sermon**

The Rev. Rebecca Myers

## Nicene Creed

*All stand.*

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**

*All remain standing.*

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord, saying, “Lord, have mercy.”

For the peace from above, for the loving kindness of God, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the holy Church of God, and for the unity of all peoples, let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For Doug our Bishop, and for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For Barrack our President, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority, let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For the city of Corbin, for every city and community, and for those who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For those who travel on land, on water, or in the air or through outer space, let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering, let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For Steve, Melanie, Tony, Jeff, Sherron, Barbara, Jerry, Linda, Ethan, Jane Calvin, Ruby, Ellen, Tim, Carol, Sarah, Ray, June, Sheila, Ken, Donna, Rob, and Paula. I ask for your petitions.

*Silence*

Let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For those serving in the armed forces, especially Sylvestre, let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

In accordance with the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for The Church of the Nativity,  
Maysville, the Rev. Michael Henderson, Rector, let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For those celebrating birthdays this week. In particular we pray for James Disney. Let us  
pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and  
captives, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, let us pray to the  
Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

For the absolution and remission of our sins and offenses, let us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

That we may end our lives in faith and hope, without suffering and without reproach, let  
us pray to the Lord.

*Lord, have mercy.*

Defend us, deliver us, and in thy compassion protect us, O Lord, by thy grace.

*Lord, have mercy.*

In the communion of the Ever Blessed Virgin Mary, Joseph, her spouse, and of all the  
saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life, to Christ our  
God.

*To thee, O Lord our God.*

*Silence*

*The Celebrant continues.*

For yours is the majesty, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

## **Confession of Sin**

*All kneel.*

Let us confess our sins to God.

*Silence.*

*Minister and People*

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.

*The Priest stands and says*

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.*

## **Peace**

*All stand.*

*Celebrant*           The peace of Christ be always with you.  
*People*             And also with you.

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

## **Announcements**

*Announcements may be made at this point in the service.*

## **Holy Communion**

*The Celebrant says*

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. *Ephesians 5:2*

## **Offertory Hymn**

*Savior of the nations, come*

Hymnal 54

*Representatives of the congregation bring the people's offerings of bread and wine, and money or other gifts, to the deacon or celebrant. The people stand while the offerings are presented and placed on the Altar.*

## **Great Thanksgiving**

*The people remain standing.*

*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*        It is truly right, and good and joyful, to give you thanks, all-holy God,  
source of life and fountain of mercy.

You have filled us and all creation with your blessing  
and fed us with your constant love;  
you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ  
and knit us into one body.  
Through your Spirit you replenish us  
and call us to fullness of life.

Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation,  
we lift our voices with all creation as we sing:

## **Sanctus**

*Celebrant and People*

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.

*The people stand or kneel.*

*The Celebrant continues*

Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace. But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love. Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people. Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation.

Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

On the night before he died for us, Our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, 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, 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 poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

*Celebrant and People*

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

*The Celebrant continues*

Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world. Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and sons, that with all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever. 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.*

*The Celebrant then continues*

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

*People and Celebrant*

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 of the Bread**

*A period of silence is kept.*

This is the true bread which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.  
*Whoever eats this bread will live for ever.*

*The Celebrant says*

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

*All baptized persons are welcome to receive Holy Communion.*

# Communion Hymn

*More Love to Thee, O Christ*

LEVAS 87

1. More love to thee, O Christ, More love to thee!  
2. Once earth - ly joy I craved, Sought peace and rest;  
3. Then shall my ev - ery breath Sing out your praise;

1. Hear thou the prayer I make On bend - ed knee;  
2. Now thee a - lone I seek, Give what is best;  
3. This be the on - ly song My heart shall raise;

1. This is my ear - nest plea;  
2. This all my prayer shall be: More love, O Christ, to Thee,  
3. This still my prayer shall be:

More love to thee, More love to thee!

*After Communion, the Celebrant says*

Let us pray.

*Celebrant and People*

God of abundance,  
you have fed us with the bread of life  
and cup of salvation;  
you have united us  
with Christ and one another;  
and you have made us one  
with all your people in heaven and on earth.  
Now send us forth  
in the power of your Spirit,  
that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world  
and continue for ever  
in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

### **Blessing**

*The priest blesses the people, saying*

May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

### **Postcommunion Hymn**

*Where cross the crowded ways of life*

Hymnal 609

### **Dismissal**

<i>Celebrant</i>	Alleluia, alleluia. Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
<i>People</i>	Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

## News & Notes

**Rebecca's Schedule:** Next week, Rev. Rebecca will be in Corbin on Tuesday, December 24, and her Sabbath day will be Monday, December 23. Please feel free to contact her any time, however, by calling 859 -429-1659 or [priest-in-charge@stjohnscorbin.org](mailto:priest-in-charge@stjohnscorbin.org).

**Adult Forum:** Next week there will be no adult Forum. We will begin again on January 5 with an 8-session series, *Lazarus at the Gate*, a series on economic discipleship.

**Christmas Dinner:** A Christmas dinner will be held at the Barn, Wednesday, December 25, 2-4pm. If you'd like to attend this community dinner, please see Paula Bain or June Sullivan.

**2013 Year-End Giving Reminders:** As you reflect on your year-end tax planning, we hope you will consider making use of the income tax charitable deduction. Whether you plan to give a gift to your local parish or a Diocesan ministry or both, here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Gifts made by check must be postmarked by December 31 to qualify as a 2013 gift. If your employer has a matching gift program, please enclose the form along with your check.
- Credit card gifts must be made on the Diocese website by December 31 at midnight to qualify as a 2013 gift.
- Gifts of stock are a great way to reduce your tax liability, while making a gift to your parish or Diocesan ministry. If you own appreciated stock, you can deduct the full fair market value of the stock at the time of the gift and not be subject to capital gains tax on the increase in the value of the stock. Please contact Angie Smith at the Diocese office if you are interested in making this type of gift.
- Are you 70 ½ or older? 2013 is the last year you can take advantage of a special tax break for year-end gifts from your IRA. You can roll over up to \$100,000 from your IRA to the Diocese and avoid taxes on the income. This is a great option for those who must take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) but want to avoid higher taxes on the additional income. Please contact Angie Smith for information if you plan on taking advantage of this.

**Prayers Requested for the youth attending the Diocesan Junior & Senior High Youth Event December 27-30, at the Cathedral Domain.**

*God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**Schedule of Services for Christmas Eve, Christmas and New Year's Day**

**Tuesday, December 24:**

7:00pm – Family Eucharist

11:00pm – Midnight Eucharist

**Wednesday, December 25**

9:00am – Morning Prayer

No Wednesday Evening Service

**Sunday, December 29**

10:00am – No Adult Formation

11:00am – Christmas Lessons and Carols or Morning Prayer

**Wednesday, January 1**

6pm – Wednesday worship

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