

Grace Episcopal Church

The Second Sunday of Advent

December 10, 2023

The Holy Eucharist: Rite I - 10:30 a.m.



PRELUDE

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People (Psalm 42) - G. Sewell

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

INTROIT (vv. 3-4)

(Choir only)

O come, O come, Emmanuel

PROCESSIONAL HYMN #53 *(In the Blue Hymnal)*

Once he came in blessing

1 Once he came in bless - ing, all our ills re - dress - ing;
 2 Still he comes with - in us, still his voice would win us
 3 Thus, if thou canst name him, not a - shamed to claim him,
 4 One who thus en - dur - eth bright re - ward se - cur - eth.

came in like-ness low - ly, Son of God most ho - ly;
 from the sins that hurt us, would to Truth con - vert us:
 but wilt trust him bold - ly nor dost love him cold - ly,
 Come, then, O Lord Je - sus, from our sins re - lease us;

bore the cross to save us, hope and free - dom gave us.
 not in tor - ment hold us, but in love en - fold us.
 he will then re - ceive thee, heal thee, and for - give thee.
 let us here con - fess thee till in heaven we bless thee.

323 OPENING ACCLAMATION AND COLLECT FOR PURITY

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

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

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.**

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.



159 THE COLLECT FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And with thy spirit.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

Merciful God, who sent your 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 lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated

THE FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 40:1-11

Lector A Reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah.

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of
the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for
our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"

- The Word of the Lord

All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand for ever.
Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 85:1-2, 8-13 (*responsively by whole verse*)

¹ You have been gracious to your land,
O LORD,
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

² **You have forgiven the iniquity of your people
and blotted out all their sins.**

⁸ I will listen to what the LORD God is saying,
for he is speaking peace to his faithful people
and to those who turn their hearts to him.

⁹ **Truly, his salvation is very near to those
who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.**

¹⁰ Mercy and truth have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each
other.

¹¹ **Truth shall spring up from the earth,
and righteousness shall look down from
heaven.**

¹² The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.

¹³ **Righteousness shall go before him,
and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.**

THE EPISTLE

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Lector A Reading from the second letter of Peter.

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

- The Word of the Lord **Thanks be to God.**

SEQUENCE HYMN #75 (vv. 1-2)

There's a voice in the wilderness crying

*There's a voice in the wilderness crying,
a call from the ways untrod:
Prepare in the desert a highway,
a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted,
the lofty hills brought low;
make straight all the crooked places
where the Lord our God may go!*

*O Zion, that bringest good tidings,
get thee up to the heights and sing!
Proclaim to a desolate people
the coming of their King.
Like the flowers of the field they perish,
like grass our works decay,
the power and pomp of nations
shall pass like a dream away;*

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
People **Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
 and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

-- The Gospel of the Lord **People: Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

SEQUENCE HYMN #75 (v. 3)

There's a voice in the wilderness crying

*but the word of our God endureth,
 the arm of the Lord is strong;
 he stands in the midst of nations,
 and he will right the wrong.
 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd,
 the lambs he'll gently hold;
 to pastures of peace he'll lead them,
 and bring them safe to his fold.*

THE ADVENT WREATH - The Second Candle: The Candle of Peace

The Sheets Family

The congregation remains standing

The Reader:

Each year during the Season of Advent, we light these candles. They together stand for us as a symbol of Christ breaking into a darkened world in need of the gifts he brings. We prepare, during this Advent season, to celebrate how that light first broke in at his birth on Christmas Day. We also look forward, in these days, to his return at his second coming, when the fullness of that light will shine on those who are prepared to receive him in joy.

The light of each of the flames symbolizes the light of Jesus Christ in the world and in our lives with the four outer candles representing Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. The center candle is the Christ Candle to be lighted on Christmas Eve celebrating Jesus's appearance among us.

Last Sunday we lit the first candle of our Advent Wreath, the candle of hope. We light it again today remembering that our hope is in Jesus.

Here the first candle is lighted.

The Reader:

The second candle of Advent is the Candle of Peace.

It is sometimes called the Bethlehem Candle to remind us of the place in which preparations were made to receive and cradle the Christ child.

Peace is a gift that we must be prepared for and God gives it to us when we turn to him in faith. The prophet Isaiah called Jesus "the Prince of Peace."

Through John the Baptist, as in today's Gospel, and all the other prophets, God asks us to prepare our hearts so that he might come in.

Our peace is found in Jesus Christ. We light this candle today to remind us that he brings peace to all who trust in him.

Here the second candle is lighted.

Let us pray.

The People:

Loving God, thank you for the peace you give us through Jesus. Help us prepare our hearts to receive him. Bless our worship. Guide us in all that we say and do. We ask it in the name of the one born in Bethlehem. Amen.

THE SERMON

The Reverend Lester Smith

326 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.**

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 **Michael**, our Presiding Bishop, **Samuel and Jennifer** our bishops, and **Ed** our priest, that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments. Lord in Your mercy **Hear our prayer**

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.

Lord in Your mercy **Hear our prayer**

We beseech thee also so to rule the hearts of those who bear the authority of government in this and every land especially **Joe**, our President, **Roy** our Governor, **Jason** our mayor, **John** our Councilman, and **Tommy** our Councilman-Elect, that they may be led to wise decisions and right actions for the welfare and peace of the world. Lord in Your mercy **Hear our prayer**

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. Lord in Your mercy **Hear our prayer**

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.

Silence

We pray for all who are traveling, especially **Cameron** Klass, **Julia** Klass, and **Josey** Parker and those with special needs:

Libby Miller, **Lou** Adkins, **Mark** Adkins, **Amanda** Amon, **Ella** Asebes, **David** Bankston, **Rhonda** Bralkowski, **Alice** Brandon & family, **Gayle** Burke, **Art** Burkhart, **Emily** Duquette Byers, **Seraphina** Byers, **Lynne** Cleckley, **John** Clippard, **Joan** Clodfelter, **Linda** Clodfelter, **Morgan** Curia, **Tracy** Davis, **Susan** Dixon, **Renee** Ewbank, **Cathy** Farley, **Jenny** Gallen, **Shana** Garland, **Jane** Grimes, **George** Hanna, **Rob** Hare, **Kristen** Harris, **Nancy** Hinkle, **Lucy** Hodge, **Chris** Hodges, **Jon** Huff, **Jahiya** Huntley, **Greg** Hutchins, **Tanya** Johnson, **Chris** Kearley, **Cara** Lee, **Beattie** Logan, **Warren** MacKinstry, **Debbie** Mason, **Kate** McKenzie, **Roan** Mitchell, **Dan & Fran** Moore, **Ronnie** Moretz, **O'Lema** Morgan, **Chocolate** Myers, **Howard** Palmer, **Jerry** Peace, **Fred** Pfohl, **Gabby** Plott, **Pat** Plummer, **Libby** Robert, **Gail** Rogers, **Jacklyn** Rojas, **Lucas** Sanabria, **Suzu** Sheets, **Patty** Short, **Talmadge** Silversides, **Annabell** Smith, **Martha Ellen** Smith, **Jackie** Touchton, **Brenda** Tyndall, **Lou** Van Dyke, **Perry** Grimes Van Dyke, **Kathy** Watson, **Flynn** Williams, **Henry** Williams, **Mary & Jay** Williams, **Vickie** Wolfe, and **Charlotte** Young.

“Are there others?”

Lord, in your mercy *Hear our prayer.*

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.

331 CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION OF SINS

Celebrant Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.

Silence may be kept.

Celebrant and People

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against thee in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved thee with our whole heart;

we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.

For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us;

that we may delight in thy will, and walk in thy ways, to the glory of thy Name. 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.**

A Minister may then say one or more of the following sentences, first saying

Hear the Word of God to all who truly turn to him.

Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. *Matthew 11:28*

God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *John 3:16*

This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. *1 Timothy 1:15*

If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the perfect offering for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.

1 John 2:1-2

332 THE PEACE

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People **And with thy spirit.**

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Comfort, Comfort - J. Ferguson

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

The offering is brought forward as the hymn is sung.

PRESENTATION HYMN #76 (v. 5)

On Jordan's bank



5 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to thee, whose
5 ad - vent doth thy peo - ple free; whom with the Fa - ther
5 we a - dore and Ho - ly Spi - rit ev - er - more.

340 THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (*Eucharistic Prayer II*)

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And with thy spirit.**
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.**

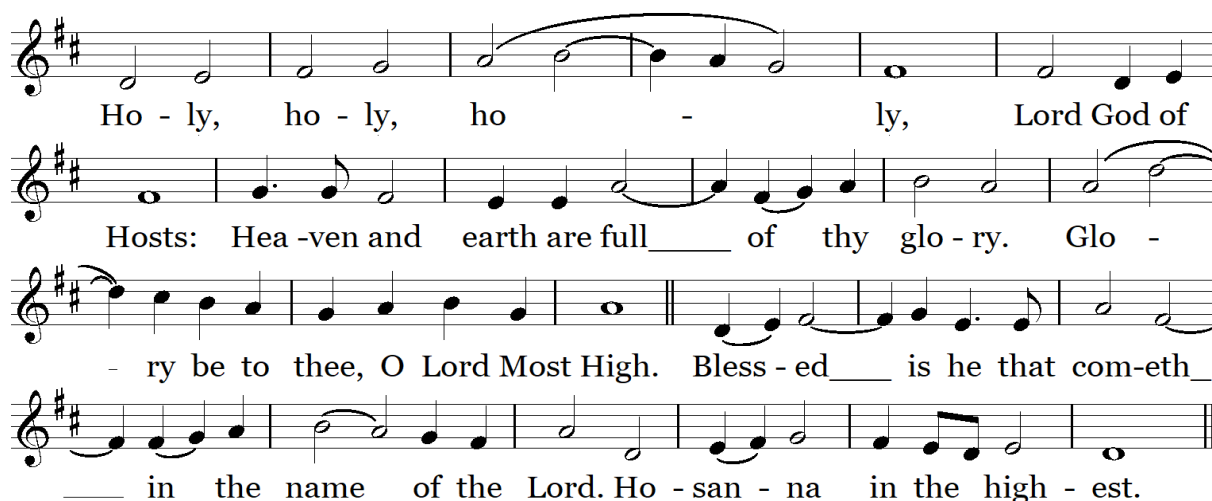
Celebrant

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,

SANCTUS
#S114



The people may stand or kneel

All glory be to thee, O Lord our God, for that thou didst create heaven and earth, and didst make us in thine own image; and, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption. He made there a full and perfect sacrifice for 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.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks to thee, he broke 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 this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, 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, we thy people do celebrate and make, 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; and looking for his coming again with power and great glory.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us, and, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, to bless and sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies. Grant, we beseech thee, that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction; and also that we and all thy whole Church may be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, and in 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,

336	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.
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337 **THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

Celebrant Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People **Therefore, let us keep the feast.**

337 **FRACTION ANTHEM AND PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS**

<i>Celebrant</i>	<i>People</i>
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,	have mercy upon us.
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,	have mercy upon us.
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,	grant us thy peace.

Celebrant and People

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

338 **INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION**

Celebrant 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 baptized Christians are invited to come forward for Holy Communion at the Lord's Table.

You may receive both the bread and wine, or only the bread or only the wine.

Receiving Communion in one or both forms is sufficient sacramentally.

If you prefer neither bread nor wine, you also are invited to come forward and to simply cross your arms over your chest as a sign for the minister to provide you with a holy blessing of the Lord.

339 **POST-COMMUNION PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Celebrant Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

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

May the peace of God that passes all that we can imagine keep your hearts and your thoughts in the knowledge of the love of God and of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord; and may the blessing of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit remain with you forever. ✠ Amen.

POST-COMMUNION HYMN #65 *(In the Blue Hymnal)*

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.

339 THE DISMISSAL

Celebrant Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
People Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers - J. Mansfield

*The flowers on the altar today are given to the glory of God
by Staley Nance & Sandy Reynolds
in honor of Joan Clodfelter and the Grace Church Choir.*

WORSHIP LEADERS TODAY

Lector: Mary Matthews	Greeter: Sandra Husted
Intercessor: Melissa Thaer	Ushers: Doug Hartzog, Tommy Black
LEMs: Mary Matthews, Kathie Goodman	Acolytes: Erik Petruzzi, Cooper Petruzzi, Tanner Sheets

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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The Most Reverend Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop
The Right Reverend Samuel Rodman, Diocesan Bishop
The Right Reverend Jennifer Brooke-Davidson, Assistant Bishop

The Reverend Edward T. Kelaher, Rector
Joan Clodfelter, Minister of Music
Kathy Johnson, Christian Education Director
Maureen Tincher, Parish Administrator
John Taylor, Facilities Manager

THE VESTRY

2024

Lynn Meeks Treasurer
Sandy Reynolds Asst. Clerk
Logan Sheets
Susan Terrell

2025

Wes Allred Sr. Warden
Thompson Miller Asst. Treasurer
Marjorie Parker Jr. Warden
Marilyn Taylor

2026

Karl Bolstad
Bright Carter
Sally Dodd Clerk
Henry Duquette Asst. Jr. Warden

Vestry Person of the Month for December is Karl Bolstad.