

**St. James Episcopal Church
Batavia, New York**

The Third Sunday of Advent



A Season of Hope

The Third Sunday of Advent

December 13, 2020 10:00 am

As we are separated, please remember that you are an important part of the St. James Community and know that we are united in love and worship.

*"BCP" refers to "Book of Common Prayer"
Please join your voice in responses printed in bold*

The Word of God

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Today we light the first, second, and third candles of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE, the second candle is PEACE, and the third candle is JOY.

You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. Isaiah 55:12

Gracious God, you came to us in human flesh and you abide with us in the Holy Spirit. Fill us with your joy, and help us shine as a light to the world. Through Jesus Christ, who makes our joy complete. **Amen.**

Opening Sentences

BCP pg. 355

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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

The Collect for Purity

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.**

Glory to God

BCP pg. 356

Glory to God in the highest,

And peace to his people on earth,

Lord God, heavenly King, Almighty God and Father,

We worship you, we give you thanks,

We praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,

you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;

you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,

you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of God the Father. Amen

Collect of the Day

BCP pg. 236

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

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. **Amen.**

The First Reading

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;

to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
For I the Lord love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 126 *In convertendo*

BPC p. 782

- 1 When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, ***
then were we like those who dream.
- 2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, ***
and our tongue with shouts of joy.
- 3 Then they said among the nations, ***
"The LORD has done great things for them."
- 4 The LORD has done great things for us, ***
and we are glad indeed.
- 5 Restore our fortunes, O LORD, ***
like the watercourses of the Negev.
- 6 Those who sowed with tears ***
will reap with songs of joy.
- 7 Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, ***
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

The Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ According to John

1:6-8, 19-28

Glory to you, Lord Christ

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon *A Beacon of Hope in the Wilderness*

Mother Bonnie Morris

A highway in a desert, a lighthouse shining on the shore, the city limits sign of your hometown after a long journey, the sunrise, snowdrops in the spring—these are all beacons of hope, signs that help is at hand, or that a long-desired destination is close.

Our season of Advent is Hope. Its signs point, encourage, and teach—a new candle lit on the wreath, little windows open on an Advent calendar—reminding us that we are one day closer to the birth of the Christ child. John the Baptist, that prickly pointer of obvious failings to people, wearing rough clothing and eating subsistence food, is the greatest sign of all. He is our beacon of hope in the wilderness; he points to the Son of God, and he directs his followers to follow Jesus. John the Baptist is the voice crying in the wilderness "He is here!" in that desert in Judea 2,000 years ago or in our desert today. A desert of rocks and hills, or a desert of longing, emptiness and need. The voice cries out "God is with you! Be ready. Receive him."

John's voice is not one of complacency or passivity. The comfort his message is one of action, not one of rest. "God is coming, and you have work to do!" The work that John the Baptist calls us into is of building a road in our hearts, of clearing out rubbish to make room for love, for seeking forgiveness in truly changing our lives. Hope is here and is among us, but the journey

and the work are not over, in fact, they are just beginning. The signs of John the Baptist are not given to say, "sit down and put your feet up." They are here to say that we have not been waiting or laboring in vain and to keep going!

The journey and the work are not over but look! It is hope! It is a sign that something is actually happening. It is a movement toward progress, A sign that we have not been waiting or laboring in vain.

We all have beacons of hope that we seek in our lives. Let us seek them every day. Advent is a short season, just four weeks, but John's call to us is about our life's work. John's call is a light in our darkness, a call to energy and courage when we are worn down, ready to stop. Keep going! The light is here! Dear friends, you are all beacons of hope, lights of friendship, and signs of love. Keeping shining!

The Baptismal Covenant

BCP pg. 304

Do you believe in God the Father?

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body
and the life everlasting.**

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?

I will, with God's help.

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

I will, with God's help.

Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

I will, with God's help.

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

I will, with God's help.

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

I will, with God's help.

Prayers of the People for the Season of Hope.

We offer our prayers of hope for the earth we inhabit; that we can work together to protect and honor creation so others can benefit from its beauty and holiness for years to come.

silence

We offer our prayers for all the people of the world, embracing diversity as a sacred gift from God.

silence

We pray that all people can enjoy the freedoms and security we often take for granted and we remember those who put themselves in harm's way to allow us to live with those freedoms; **especially, Eric, David, Paul, Brandon, Michael, Alex, Chad, Jim, Devyn and Trevor.**

Lord, we ask you to watch over the elected officials that govern our country, our state, and our city. Give them the desire to put the needs of the people over their own interests and the wisdom to make decisions that protect the dignity and safety of every human being.

silence

As we enter into the season of hope, help us to remember to pause, and open ourselves to this gift.

silence

We remember the hundreds of thousands of health care workers who are exhausted to the bone and feel hopeless during this pandemic and ask that you continue to give them strength and courage as they minister to their fellow man in the midst of overwhelming challenges.

silence

Continue to guide this parish in its discernment process. Help us to recognize the possibilities and challenges offered in the present moment and embrace them with courage and hope.

silence

Make us instruments of your peace. Where there is despair, let us bring hope, and where there are those that feel hopeless, help us to see them through your eyes.

silence

We come before you with thanksgiving and gratitude for all the blessings we have received by grace, not because we deserve them. Give us eyes to recognize your "fingerprints" in our everyday lives.

silence

And we ask that you hear our intercessory prayers for the spiritual and physical healing of our loved ones; **especially Tim, Carolyn, Douglas, Aiden, Gabriella, Carla, Venus, Beth Ann, Cathy, Wendy, Evan, Travis, Pat, Nicholas, Bob, Charlene, Brian, Rita, Garth, Jessica, Mark, Steve, Bill, Joanne, Donna, Richie, Paula, David, Kim, Charlene and.** *(please name your special intentions either silently or aloud.)*

silence

Lord, we know that hope is a choice. During this season of anticipation, when the world seems out of control, renew in us a faith that places our hope in Jesus, the one light that can overcome the darkness, and fill us with love. **Amen.**

Confession of Sin

BCP pg. 360

The deacon bids us to confession:

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

A period of silence is kept.

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.

The Presider says:

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all our 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

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Doxology (spoken)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures, here below.
Praise Him above ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.**

Spiritual Communion

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

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

A period of silence is kept.

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast.

Let us now offer this prayer for Spiritual Communion together, as One Body, with our brothers and sisters near and far.

Dearest Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Most Holy Sacrament, and that you fill us at all times with your holy, healing, and life-giving Presence. I love you above all else, and my desire is to always welcome you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you in consecrated bread and wine, help me to know your Presence spiritually in my heart. I embrace you, knowing that you are already here, and I unite myself wholly with you. Never let me feel separated from you or from your love. Amen.

The Blessing

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.**

Dismissal

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

Thanks be to God.

BCP pg. 365

Thank you for joining the St. James community.



Happy Birthday!

Peter Mark 12/14 & Jack Kershner 12/20

ADVENT STUDY!

All are invited to attend a deanery Advent Study that will be held via zoom on the two remaining Sundays in the Advent season; December 13 and 20. The theme is HOPE and the materials are free. The curriculum was designed by Living Compass and is available on line to download.

CHRISTMAS ANGEL TREE

As you begin your Christmas shopping don't forget the Saint James Christmas Angel Collection. We will once again be collection hats, mittens, scarves, and other new warm winter wear. These items will be distributed to those in need in the Batavia area. All sizes are needed from babies through adults. Some will be sent over to our neighbors at the Batavia Middle School. There are children right here in our community who do not have proper clothing for our cold winters. We will be collecting items right through Sunday, December 20th.

FISH FRY MEETING VIA ZOOM

A meeting will be held on January 4th at 7:00 PM to discuss the possible options for holding the Fish Fry dinners in 2021. As of this writing, the church building is closed and the possibility of holding a major fundraising event seems dismal. However, with the plans of a vaccine on the horizon, we would like to think positively. If you have helped with Fish Frys in the past or are interested in hearing more about this wonderful ministry, please join us! The Zoom link is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3428423369?pwd=a1NVVDBhY2xXMGVQeEN2ZnBQT2hjZz09>

Meeting ID: 342 842 3369

Passcode: church

Dial by your location 1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

BOOK STUDY VIA ZOOM

The book *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio is an easy reading book and as described by Amazon, "Kindness brings us together no matter how far apart we are. Millions of people have read the #1 *New York Times* bestseller *WONDER* and fallen in love with Auggie Pullman, an ordinary boy with an extraordinary face." A perfect read for all of us during our current times!

Wonder is available through several retailers including Amazon and Target.

Terry McGuire will lead us in an informal book discussion on Saturday, January 9th at 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

Please plan to join us via Zoom at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3428423369?pwd=Q2I3eFBnUWFhK0JLOG1OcHhMRW9WQT09>

Meeting ID: 342 842 3369

Passcode: church

Dial by phone: 1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

PRISON MINISTRY

Items are requested for male inmates at Gen County Jail:

- Cheater Readers (glasses 1.0, 1.25, 1.50, 1.75 2.0, 2.25, 2.50, 2.75, 3.00)
several pairs of each strength please
- Deodorant for men
- *Grease for dark skin /hair
- *Vaseline
- *Shampoo/ conditioner
Breathe Right strips
Sugar free cough drops
- *Body lotion ex: Eucerin, Cerave
Toe and finger nail clippers
Poly grip for dentures
Dental Floss
- *Large containers/tubes are acceptable; I will dispense into medicine cups for management. Inmates are issued: toothbrush, toothpaste and basic soap. Diane Cox

**AS IN THE PAST, WE ARE REQUESTING
DONATIONS FOR THE MIGRANT WORKERS IN OUR AREA**

The following is a list of needed items:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Socks (must cover the ankle) | Ball Caps (new or clean used) |
| Toothpaste | Toothbrush |
| T-shirt (large or XL, short sleeve) | Disposable Razors |
| Shaving cream | Shampoo |
| Toilet Paper | Paper Towels |
| Towels (terry) | Plastic shopping bags |
| Bar of soap | |

To drop off your donations for the Migrant Ministry, Prison Ministry or the Angel Tree use the office door (Turner entrance) on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, 9:00 am thru 12:00, with collection boxes right inside the entrance. Please mark your donation and put in appropriate collection box.

December 13th through December 20th

Dec 13

10:00 a.m.

Holy Eucharist on Zoom

To join Zoom go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89810857988>

Or join by phone: (646) 558-8656, and use code 898 108 57988

10:45 a.m.

Our Faith Discussion Class on Zoom

To join Zoom go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89810857988>

Or join by phone: (646) 558-8656, and use code 898 108 57988

6 – 7 p.m.

Advent Discussion Group on Zoom

To join Zoom go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81480735181?pwd=UFRqa05MczBaeXJTUzMW5yWFZldz09>

Dec 14

2:00 p.m.

Finance Team Meeting on Zoom

To join Zoom go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/960235378>

Dec. 15

7:00 p.m.

Vestry Meeting on Zoom

To join Zoom go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/936132599917>

or join by phone: (646)558 8656, and use code 936 132 59917

Dec 16

12:00 p.m.

Bible Discussion Group on Zoom

To join go to <https://zoom.us/j/579180457>

or join by phone: (646) 558-8656 and use code 579 180 457

4:30 p.m.

Communications and PR Team Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84476838232?pwd=UmRkaUpRTENrSdWQWJsSnRVK29Zdz09>

Tuesday and Thursday Evenings

7:00 p.m.

Evening Prayer with the Genesee Deanery

To join go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88459547624>

or join by phone: 1-929-205-6099, and use code: 88459547624

Dec 20

10:00 a.m.

Holy Eucharist on Zoom

To join Zoom go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89810857988>

Or join by phone: (646) 558-8656, and use code 898 108 57988

10:45 a.m.

Our Faith Discussion Class on Zoom

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Or join by phone: (646) 558-8656, and use code 898 108 57988

6 – 7 p.m.

Advent Discussion Group on Zoom

To join Zoom go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81480735181?pwd=UFRqa05MczBaeXJTUzMW5yWFZldz09>

7:00 p.m.

Deanery Lessons and Carols—streaming information will be published soon.



St. James Episcopal Church

405 East Main Street

Batavia, NY 14020

**Check out our website and Facebook for
online worship opportunities**

Everyone is Welcome!

The Rev. Bonnie F. Morris, Rector

rector.stjames@outlook.com

The Rev. Deacon Diana Leiker, dllart@aol.com

Choir Director: Dillon Hirsch, Organist: David Lange
Administrator: Barbara King, Bookkeeper: Sherry Garigen

Wardens:

Warden: Jim Neider, (585) 409-8891, jmaneider@outlook.com

Warden: Judy Essig, (585) 820-2615, jessig@gvboces.org

Vestry:

Diane Cox, Amy Celentano, Bonnie Dvoroznak,

Dorian Ely, Barbara King, Dean Perry,

Harold Odell, Barbara Pierce, Bill Sofia

Clerk of the Vestry: Cathy Judkins

Treasurers: Peter Mark, Keith Price, Rick Iannello

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