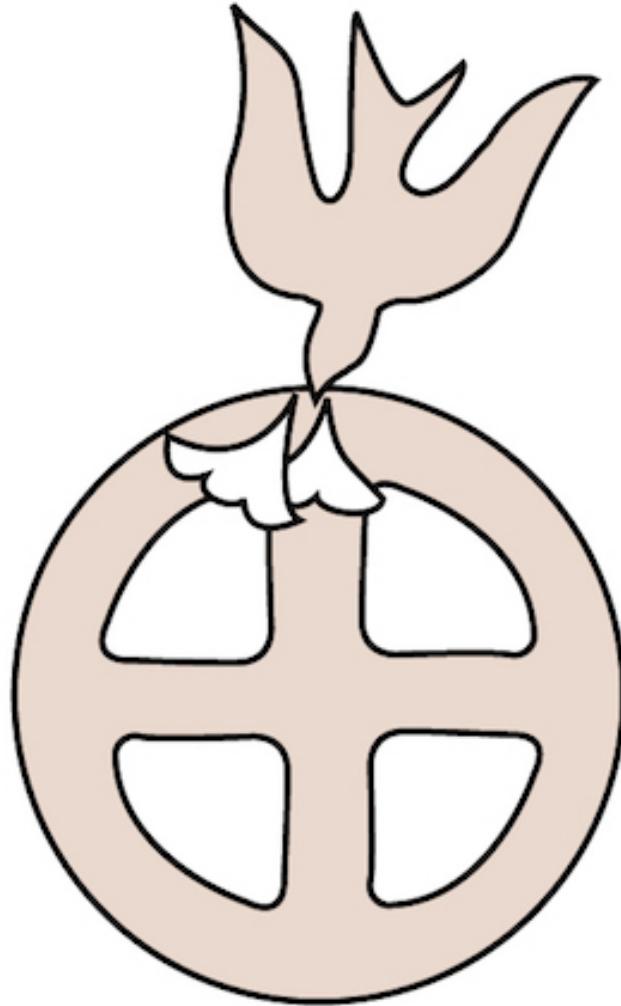


ST. GREGORY THE GREAT EPISCOPAL CHURCH



DECEMBER 11, 2022
LIVE STREAMED ON YOUTUBE

10:30AM

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION *

What happens when you are spiritually prepared and desire to receive communion, but can't?

Such a case is referenced by a paragraph in the 1979 Prayer Book:

If a person desires to receive the Sacrament, but, by reason of extreme sickness or physical disability, is unable to eat and drink the Bread and Wine, the Celebrant is to assure that person that all the benefits of Communion are received, even though the Sacrament is not received with the mouth.

A nation-wide shut down due to a pandemic fits, I'm sure we'll agree, with the words "by any other impediment" listed in the first Prayer Book. Our Lord will not cut us off from his grace. If we truly desire him, he will come to us, even if we cannot receive the Sacraments he has instituted so that we may receive his grace. This is not a new idea. St Thomas Aquinas, writing nearly 800 years ago, said:

before receiving a sacrament, the reality of the sacrament can be had through the very desire of receiving the sacrament. Accordingly, before actual reception of this sacrament, a man can obtain salvation through the desire of receiving it, just as he can before Baptism through the desire of Baptism, as stated above (Summa, III.73.iii)

Desiring to receive the spiritual grace of the Most Holy Eucharist (and being prevented from receiving it sacramentally) is known as Spiritual Communion. It is so very important to note that this gift is given to us when we cannot, for very good reason, be present at mass.

When you are watching a live-stream or recording of our liturgies, any of the following prayers may be said at the moment of communion when you would normally leave your pew and make your journey to the altar:

In Union, dear Lord, with the faithful at every altar of Your Church where Your blessed Body and Blood are being offered to the Father, I desire to offer You praise and thanksgiving. I believe that You are present in the Holy Sacrament. And since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, I ask You to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself to You, and embrace You with all the affections of my soul. Let me never be separated from You. Let me live and die in Your love. Amen.

OR

Faithful God, in the wonder of your wisdom and love, you fed your people in the wilderness with the bread of angels, and you sent Jesus to be the bread of life. Though I cannot physically consume these gifts of bread and wine, I thank you that I have received the sacrament of Christ's presence, the forgiveness of sins, and all other benefits of Christ's passion. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may I embody your desire, and be renewed for your service, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen. (from *Enriching Our Worship 2*)

OR

**"My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Blessed Sacrament.
I love you above all things and I desire you with all my heart.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.
I embrace you as if you were already in my heart
and unite myself to you completely.
Please do not let me ever be separated from you." (by St. Alphonsus Liguori)**

**Except where otherwise indicated, the whole of this article (with only very little amendment) is taken from the website of St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where it was posted on April 5, 2020. No author was specified.*

THE HOLY VIRTUAL EUCHARIST

The Third Sunday of Advent

THE WORD OF GOD

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prelude

Adoration

Flor Peeters

We invite you to please silence your cell phones and to enter worship in stillness, silence, and reverence during the Prelude, which begins our service.

Processional Hymn 444

Blessed be the God of Israel

THORNBURY

1 Blessed be the God of Is - rael, who comes to set us free;
2 He from the house of Da - vid a child of grace has given;
3 On pri - son - ers of dark-ness the sun be - gins to rise,
he vis - its and re - deems us, he grants us lib - er - ty.
a Sa - vior comes a - mong us to raise us up to heaven.
the dawn - ing of for - give - ness up - on the sin - ner's eyes.
The pro - phets spoke of mer - cy, of free - dom and re - lease;
Be - fore him goes his her - ald, fore - run - ner in the way,
He guides the feet of pil - grims a - long the paths of peace.
God shall ful - fill his prom - ise and bring his peo - ple peace. —
the pro - phet of sal - va - tion, the har - bin - ger of Day. —
O bless our God and Sa - vior, with songs that nev - er cease. —

OPENING ACCLAMATION

BCP 355

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

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

COLLECT FOR PURITY

BCP 355

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.

* Trisagion S-102

Holy God

Alexander Archangelsky

Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and Might - y,
Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One, Have mer - cy up - on us.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

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 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

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

Thanks be to God.

*Canticle 15 S-247

Song of Mary

Betty Carr Pulkingham

Antiphon
Unison or harmony

1. My soul pro - claims the great - ness
of the Lord, my spi - rit re - joic - es in
claims the great - ness of the Lord, my
God my Sa - vior; for he has looked
spi - rit re - joic - es in God
with fa - vor on his low - ly ser - vant.

2 From this day all generations will call me blessed;
3 He has mercy on those who fear him
4 He has shown the strength of his arm,
5 He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
6 He has filled the hungry with good things,
7 He has come to the help of his ser - vant Israel,
8 The promise he made to our fathers,
9 Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
10 As it was in the be - ginning, is now,
2 the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.
3 in every gen - er - ation. [Ant.]
4 he has scattered the proud in their con - ceit.
5 and has lifted up the lowly. [Ant.]
6 and the rich he has sent a - way empty.
7 for he has remembered his prom - ise of mercy,
8 to Abraham and his chil - dren for ever. [Ant.]
9 and to the Ho - ly Spirit:
10 and will be for ev - er. A - men. [Ant.]

The antiphon may be sung in unison, with the counter-melody played by an instrument, or it may be sung in three parts.

THE SECOND READING

James 5:7-10

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

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

Thanks be to God.

Sequence Hymn 70

Herald, sound the note of judgment

HERALD, SOUND



1 Her - ald, sound the note of judg - ment, warn - ing us of right and
 2 Her - ald, sound the note of glad - ness; tell the news that Christ is
 3 Her - ald, sound the note of par - don— those re - pent - ing are for -
 4 Her - ald, sound the note of tri - umph; Christ has come to share our



wrong, turn - ing us from sin and sad - ness
 here; make a path - way through the des - ert
 given; God re - ceives his way - ward child - ren,
 life, bring - ing God's own love and pow - er,



till once more we sing the song.
 for the one who brings God near. Sound the trum - pet!
 and to them new life is given.
 grant - ing vic - tory in our strife.



Tell the mes - sage! Christ, the Sa - vior King, has come!

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 11:2-11

Celebrant: *The Holy Gospel of our Savior, Jesus Christ, according to Matthew.*

People: **Glory to you, O Christ.**

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.” As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The people are seated at the invitation of the preacher.

THE SERMON: The Rev. Nikki Mathis

THE NICENE CREED

BCP 358

(said by all)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: 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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE, Form VI

BCP 392

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

For all people in their daily life and work;

For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.

For this community, the nation, and the world; We pray for our President, Joseph, our Governor, Brian, and our Mayor, Kelly.

For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation;

For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;

For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;

For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

For Michael, our Presiding Bishop, Rob, Paul, and Don, our Bishops; (...) and for all bishops and other ministers, priests, deacons, and clergy associates, especially Lin, Dutton, Carol, Ellen, Christina, & Nikki;

For all who serve God in his Church.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation. We pray especially for (...)

Hear us, Lord;

For your mercy is great.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life. We give thanks for (...)

We will exalt you, O God our King;

And praise your Name for ever and ever.

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;

Who put their trust in you.

The Celebrant adds a Collect.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

BCP 360

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

Celebrant and People: **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Celebrant: 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

Celebrant: The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Anthem

A Cradle Waits

Jean Anne Shafferman

See, amid the winter snow, in humble manger low,
a cradle waiting for the tiny Child, tender, meek and mild,
the Savior.
Soon He'll come, the Promised One, God's incarnate Son,
Messiah.
See, amid the winter snow, in humble manger low,
a cradle waits.
See, upon a lonely hill, a shepherd standing still
is keeping watch o'er silent flock by night, in the starry light.
But soon the angel host in heav'n will sing, (Gloria!) joyous news they bring:
The Savior!
See, upon a lonely hill, in the twilight still, a shepherd waits.
See, in distant Eastern land, a noble wise man stands
and gazes far into the Eastern sky, looking for a sign:
A blazing star!
It will be a sign. Soon its light will shine to guide him;
Guide him to the tiny Child, tender, meek and mild,
the Savior.
See, amid the winter snow, in humble manger low,
a cradle waits.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING, EUCHARISTIC PRAYER B

BCP 367

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. (*Here a Proper Preface is said*)

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-127

Holy, holy, holy Lord

Calvin Hampton

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
pow - er and might, — hea - ven and earth are full of your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high -
est. Bless - ed 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 many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

*Celebrant and 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 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.**

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

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BCP 364

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.

*Fraction Anthem S-158

O Lamb of God

Healey Willan

O Lamb of God, that ta - kest a -
way the sins of the world, have mer - cy up -
on us. O Lamb of God, that
ta - kest a - way the sins of the world, have
mer - cy up - on us. O Lamb of
God, that ta - kest a - way the sins of the
world, grant us thy peace.

THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an -
 2 Then cleansed be ev - ery breast from sin; make
 3 For thou art our sal - va - tion, Lord, our
 4 To heal the sick stretch out thine hand, and
 5 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to thee, whose

1 noun - ces that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,
 2 straight the way for God with - in, and let each heart pre -
 3 re - fuge, and our great re - ward; with - out thy grace we
 4 bid the fall - en sin - ner stand; shine forth, and let thy
 5 ad - vent doth thy peo - ple free; whom with the Fa - ther

1 for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings.
 2 pare a home where such a might - y guest may come.
 3 waste a - way like flowers that with - er and de - cay.
 4 light re - store earth's own true love - li - ness once more.
 5 we a - dore and Ho - ly Spi - rit ev - er - more.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER

Enriching Our Worship 2

Faithful God, in the wonder of your wisdom and love, you fed your people in the wilderness with the bread of angels, and you sent Jesus to be the bread of life. Though I cannot physically consume these gifts of bread and wine, I thank you that I have received the sacrament of Christ's presence, the forgiveness of sins, and all other benefits of Christ's passion. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may I embody your desire, and be renewed for your service, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

BCP 366

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.

THE BLESSING

1 Re - joice! re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear!
 2 See that your lamps are burn - ing, re - ple-nish them with oil;
 3 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;

The eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
 look now for your sal - va - tion, the end of sin and toil.
 a - rise, thou Sun so longed for, a - bove this dark - ened sphere!

The Bride - groom is a - ris - ing, and soon he will draw nigh;
 The mar - riage - feast is wait - ing, the gates wide o - pen stand;
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see

up, watch in ex - pec - ta - tion! at mid - night comes the cry.
 rise up, ye heirs of glo - ry, the Bride - groom is at hand!
 the day of earth's re - demp - tion, and ev - er be with thee!

THE DISMISSAL

Deacon: *Let us bless the Lord.*People: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Wake, Awake

Charles Callahan



Prayers of the People

In our Parish we pray for Ray Hoover, RuthElizabeth Conine-Nakano, Stephen Morris, Barbara Johnson, Randall Abney, Carolyn Abney, Sue Bush, Janice Rusk, Jennifer Polzin, Carol Whitson, Susan Williams, Dan Williams, Pat MacKinnon, Dick MacKinnon, Shelby Welch, Ali Elyaman, Ben Barkdoll, Don Downie, Olivia Carlisle, Angie Defalco, Ken Packer, Garrett, Ben, Mobley, Scott, Lynn, and Pete.

In thanksgiving for those celebrating their birthday this week: Lisa Hunt, Sam Preston, Cynthia Hoover, Stephanie O'Kane-Swindler, Henry Scott, Betty Littleton, and George Braman; **and for those celebrating anniversaries:** Ken & Rhonda Packer.

The people listed here are prayed for by name at each Sunday service. To request prayer for yourself or someone else, please call the office (706-546-7553). If at the beginning of the next month the person needs to remain on the list, please call and give the office an update.

Deacon Christina's Outreach* **Let's Help Church of the Common Ground**

As the cold weather kicks in, our Episcopalian brothers, sisters, and those who identify as neither, who also suffer from homelessness, receive hot coffee at Church of the Common Ground, our church without walls at Piedmont Park in Atlanta. They are in need of these specific items, 5 lb bags of sugars (no bigger than 10 lbs), containers of powdered (only) creamer, and boxes of hot chocolate. This sugar, creamer, and hot chocolate drive will continue until Christmas Day, December 25, 2022. A box for collection of these items will be in the parish hall foyer beginning today.

Blessings,
Rev. Christina Dondero

**for anybody wondering, our Outreach Committee supports local needs,
and our clergy outreach supports diocesan and wider church needs.*

TODAY

CATHEDRAL BOOKSTORE VISIT

The Cathedral Bookstore will be visiting St. Gregory's today. They will be set up in the Christian Ed building and bringing books, children's books, gifts, Episcopal -themed items, etc.

BAND OF BELIEVERS | 9:30AM

We'll have Band of Believers practice on Sunday, **12/4, 12/11, 12/18** at 9:30AM in the Children's Chapel. Let us know if you want to be involved so we can get your music ready! There will be an extra rehearsal after church on **12/18** with the pageant folks. (We'll have sandwiches after church so we don't starve.)

CHILDREN'S PAGEANT REHEARSAL | 12PM

This afternoon, we will be meeting with all children who plan to be in the Christmas Pageant IMMEDIATELY after the 10:30 service. We will be confirming the character parts for Christmas Eve, and will assign the appropriate costume for the children. If all proceeds well, we should finish with the children in just under an hour.

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING | 12PM

The Finance Committee will meet right after the 10:30AM service. All interested parishioners are welcome to attend. We meet the Sunday before the monthly Vestry meetings (which are the 2nd Tuesday of the month) in Parish Hall.

DIOCESAN CONFIRMATION | 4PM

Four of our St. Gregorians will be going to the Cathedral this afternoon at 4PM to be confirmed. They are Joshua Heard, Ruth Vann, Rebecca Welch, and Porter Welch.

THIS WEEK

ORDINATION | SAT., DEC. 17

Doug Adkins will be ordained to the Sacred Order of Deacons this coming Saturday, Dec., 17 at 2PM at St. Philip's Cathedral. If you'd like, please join the livestream at <https://episcopalatlanta.org/event/dec-17-ordination/>

NEXT WEEK

ADVENT LESSONS & CAROLS | SUNDAY, DEC. 18 @ 10:30AM

On Sunday, December 18 at the 10:30AM service, we will have an Advent Lessons and Carols w/ Holy Eucharist service. Join us for this beautiful service of readings interspersed with Advent hymns and music.

BLUE CHRISTMAS | WEDS., DEC. 21

To Those for Whom Christmas Hurts: You are not alone. You are invited to our Blue Christmas Healing Eucharist. St. Gregory the Great Episcopal Church invites you to a special holiday service of worship designed for those for whom the holidays might be difficult. This Eucharist will include laying on of hands and anointing for those who wish to receive this particular sacrament. And wherever you are in your faith journey, all are welcome to receive communion. If you have undergone

a painful loss, transition, life change, or if life has simply been hard for a while, the church cares about you and invites you to a special time for healing and peace, on Wednesday, December 21, 2022, at 6PM.

NOTES

VOLUNTEER RECONCILER NEEDED

We thank Richard Cooper for his last two years as the Reconciler. Richard is now stepping down. We are required to have someone reconcile all checking and investment account statements to the balance that is on the books. St. Gregory the Great Episcopal Church's Financial Policies require that the Reconciler is not the Treasurer or the bookkeeper. It takes about two or three hours once a month. Please contact Kendall or Les House if you are interested in volunteering to be the Reconciler. The Treasurer will provide training.

POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS

If you wish to give a poinsettia in honor or memory of a loved one, the deadline for ordering will be **Sunday, Dec. 18**. The suggested donation this year is **\$15** per dedication. Please place your completed form (*see red forms in your bulletin or in the narthex*) and your check in the offering plate on Sundays, Kendall's office door, or mail it to the parish office. You may also contact the office by phone, 706-546-7553 or email, office@stgregoryathens.org.



COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS

Community Christmas of Oglethorpe County, Inc. is a local non-profit that helps struggling families at Christmas, and also throughout the year with power bills, rent, etc. Gifts of new toys and other fun items for boys and girls ranging in age from infants to high schoolers can be dropped off *before December 14th* right here in our Parish Hall! If you would like to help with the toy collection and distribution, please contact Catherine Drewry with a text at 706-201-7241 or email OglethorpeCommunityChristmas@gmail.com. If you know local families with children who need assistance this year, please ask them to consult our webpage for application information.

CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES

2023 contribution envelopes are available on the dresser in the Parish Hall entrance way. **We have ordered even fewer boxes this year because many did not pick theirs up last year.** You may notice your # from last year is no longer available this year. If you wish to use these next year, please write your name next to the # of box that you take. Please note people last year already have boxes spoken for. Leave those boxes for them. If you had a box of envelopes last year and do not want/need them this year, please cross off your name so we know that box is available.

BLINDSPOT GROUP CHAT

If you're in your 20s or 30s and would like to stay up to date on events for your age group please reach out to Wade McGlamery, 770-624-4837, to join our group chat.

ADVENT SPIRITUAL FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES

Building Beloved Community

This Advent Season your Adult Spiritual Formation Group is offering a program over three **Thursday evenings** with guest speakers from our wider community to share their work in what we call building Beloved Community. Invoking the Advent themes of Revelation, Journey and Restoration, and inspired by our learning through Sacred Ground, we invite direction along paths our neighbors have taken in pursuit of racial justice.

December 1: Revelation

A selection from Athens Vignettes: A Dialogue with the African American Community by Dr. Roshaunda Breeden and directed by Dr. Freda Scott Giles will be presented by Dr. Giles to illustrate the local history of Linnentown, the Baldwin Hall remains, exploring the relationship between UGA and the Athens African American community, and the impact of urban renewal.

December 8: Journey

Jubilee Partners will come to share their experience of ministry caring for those on the journey of immigration who face challenges unimaginable to most of us.

December 15: Restoration

From the Friends of Brooklyn Cemetery, formed in 2006, we will learn about the work of family and community restoration to honor African American ancestors and the historic community which surrounded their final resting place first established in 1882.

Each evening will begin with a simple meal of soup and bread at 6pm in the Education Building. The presentations will begin at 6:30 following a short meditation and opening prayer, and then be followed by a time for reflection, questions and small group discussions, ending at 7:30. Please join us and invite your friends and family. Also, please notify the church office if you require the Nursery to support your attendance.

Praying with Pictures: Contemplative Christian Practices with the Tarot

Have you considered entering this brand new church year (Advent is the beginning of it, yay!) with a brand new spiritual practice? If you are intrigued by the symbolism and puzzles in the parables of Jesus, love to worship through the symbols offered in our liturgy, and hear God speaking to you through the symbolism of dreams, the beauty of creation, music, visual arts and stories, then this Advent class may be for you!

Mother Nikki will offer a 3 part workshop series (these classes are interactive, not lectures) on **Sunday mornings** at 9:15am at Adult Formation (in the parish hall), designed to explore communing with God through the symbolic pictures offered in the tarot. Contrary to popular opinion, this 78 card deck of both archetypal and daily life images is neither so much in modern times, a tool for fortune telling or occult practice, so much as it is a means to pray without words ... akin to the contemplation or writing of the intricate and symbolic artwork of a religious icon. The tarot is now much more often used as a tool for Christian mysticism and the deep work of self-awareness and growth in spiritual formation, than for other pursuits.

Following the works of Brittany Muller (author of the book, *The Contemplative Tarot: A Christian Guide to the Cards*) and Lindsay Mack (founder of Soul Tarot, a spiritual formation process using "heart centered tarot learning for transformative growth)," we'll explore the following:

December 4: Where is God in the Tarot? Christianity's relationship and roots in relation to the Tarot

December 11: Where am I in the Tarot? Interpretation, meaning, and basics for prayer with the Tarot

December 18: How is God conversing with me and what do I hear through the Tarot? Finding your Personal Prayer Practices with the Tarot

Those Who Serve

Vestry: Gail Eilers
Readers: George Krause (8AM)
Anna Thornton (10:30AM)
EMs: Karen Hankins & Beth Thornton
Crucifer: Ethan Vogt & Roger Schwenke
Torches: Rainsly Vogt & Porter Welch

Flowers: Flower Guild
Altar Guild: Barbara Dean & Jane Sheridan
Ushers: Anthony & Deborah Garner
Counters: Maggie Reinberger & Anna Hiers
Livestream: Pete Nicholls

Clergy and Staff

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Anthony Barkdoll Livestream Coordinator
anthonybarkdoll@gmail.com

Peachy Green Clean Co-op Sexton

Nursery Attendants: Missy Hamlin, Jude Red Bear, Danielle Lyle, Megan Reuter, Allie Weaver

Vestry Members: Eddie Bennett; John Bray; Stacie Court; Gail Eilers; Blaine Everson; Anna Hiers; Jane Hudson; LeeAnne Krause; Lane Norton; Maggie Reinberger; Mark Richardson; Caley Ross; Chrissy Moffett, *Clerk*; Les House, *Treasurer*

Vestry Person of the Day/Week: Gail Eilers [*eilersgail@gmail.com*](mailto:eilersgail@gmail.com)

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