

Trinity Episcopal Church

Cranford, in the Diocese of New Jersey



"St. John the Baptist" – Alvise Vivarini

The Third Sunday of Advent

Holy Eucharist ~ Rite II

December 14, 2025 at 10 AM



The Reverend Andrew David Kruger ~ Rector & Presider

Casey Woodruff ~ Senior Warden & Preacher

Anthony J. Rafaniello ~ Director of Music & Organist

Thomas Kaercher ~ Junior Warden

The Sanctuary Candle and the Altar Greens are given to the Glory of God

& in celebration of Arwen Morgan Kelly's 13th birthday by from Jana Morgan & Nathan Kelly

& in celebration of Mary Frydlewicz's (Darrell's mother) 100th birthday today by Darrell & Maureen Frydlewicz

& in memory of Alfred and Caryl Kaercher who were married this day in 1946 from Thomas Kaercher & Susan Olszewski

Welcome

Andrew Kruger

The People kneel.

I. Gathering of God's People

Prelude

Piano Improvisation

Advent Gathering Song

James Chepponis

The People sing the chant and the Cantor sings the verses.



1. See the glory of God and...
2. Oh be strong, fear not and...
3. For our God comes to save us, so
4. Oh be patient, the Lord will...
5. Bring good news to the poor and...
6. For the way is prepared, so...

Acclamation

Book of Common Prayer 128

Presider O God, make speed to save us:
People **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Preparatory Prayer

Celebrating Sunday

Presider Let us pray.

The People stand and say together

Almighty and eternal God, purify our hearts and minds, that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again in glory, he may find in us a home prepared for himself; who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

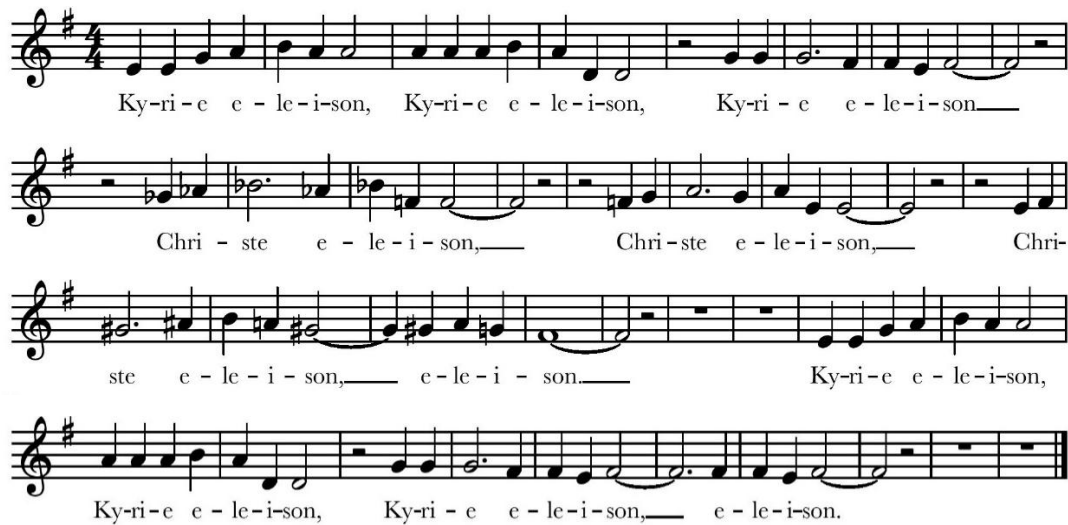
Lighting the Advent Candle

CS

The Lector says

Today is the third Sunday of Advent when we remember John the Baptist, who called the people to repentance. As we light the third candle let us remember that John prepared the way for the one who baptizes with Spirit and fire.

The third Advent Candle is lit.



Collect of the Day

BCP 212

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider 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 People sit.

Blessing of the Sunday School Children and Teachers

Andrew Kruger

Presider May God bless you as you prepare to enact again the coming of our Savior,

✠ in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

II. Proclaiming and Receiving the Word of God

First Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10

Reader A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

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.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

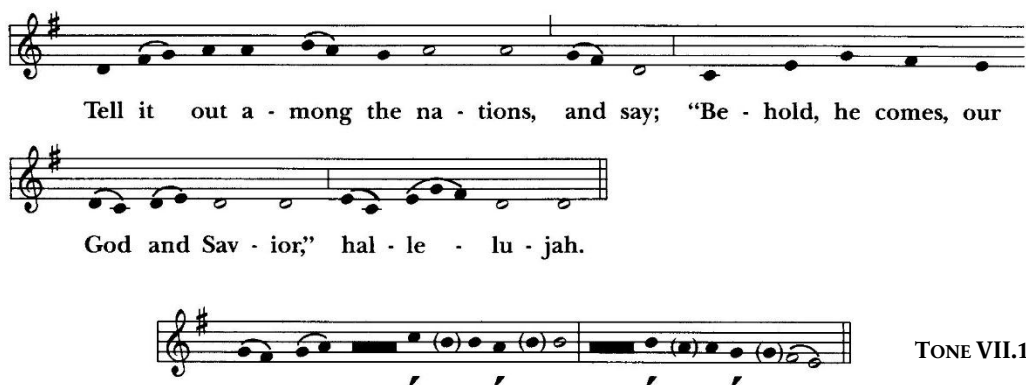
People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 146:4-9

Lauda, anima mea

Plainsong Psalter

All sing the Antiphon and Psalm.



Tell it out a - mong the na - tions, and say; "Be - hold, he comes, our
God and Sav - ior," hal - le - lu - jah.

TONE VII.1

- 4 Happy are they who have the God of Jácob f^or their help! *
whose hope is ín the LÓRD their G^od;
- 5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and áll that is ín them; *
who keeps his pr^omise for év^{er};
- 6 Who gives justice to thóse who áre oppressed, *
and food to thóse who húng^{er}.
- 7 The LORD sets the prisoners free;
the LORD opens the éyes of thé blind; *
the LORD lifts up thóse who are bówed d^own;
- 8 The LORD loves the righteous;
the LORD cáres for the stránger; *
he sustains the orphan and widow,
but frustrates the wáy of the wíck^{ed}.
- 9 The LORD shall réign for éver, *
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.
Hállélújäh! [Ant.]

Second Reading

James 5:7-10

Reader A reading from the letter of St James.

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.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The People stand.

Proclaiming Hymn

Richmond

Hymnal 72



1 Hark! the glad sound! the Sa - vior comes, the Sa - vior
2 He comes, the pri - soners to re - lease in Sa - tan's
3 He comes, the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, thy wel - come



prom - ised long: let ev - ery heart pre -
bond - age held; the gates of brass be -
soul to cure; and with the trea - sures
shall pro - claim; and heaven's e - ter - nal



pare a throne, and ev - ery voice a song.
fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
arch - es ring with thy be - lov - ed Name.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 11:2-11

Presider ✠ The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Matthew.
People **Glory to you, Lord 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.”

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

III. Responding to the Proclaimed Word of God

Homily

Casey Woodruff

Welcoming of Parents and Sponsors

Book of Occasional Services 172

The Presider invites forward the parents and sponsors of Reese Louise Rydelek for baptism and addresses them.

Presider What do you seek for yourself and your child?

Answer Life in Christ.

Presider Jesus said, “The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.” Do you accept these commandments?

Answer I do.

Presider In baptism, you died with Christ to the forces of evil and rose to new life as members of his Body. Will you study the commitments of baptism, and strive to keep them in the companionship of this community?

Answer I will, with God’s help.

Presider Will you open your heart and mind to receive anew the Good News of Jesus Christ?

Answer I will, with God’s help.

Presider Will you be regular in attending public worship, to hear the Word of God and celebrate the mystery of Christ's dying and rising?

Answer I will, with God's help.

Presider Will you join us in our life of service to the powerless and the outcast?

Answer I will, with God's help.

Presider Will you work for mercy and justice?

Answer I will, with God's help.

The Presider then addresses the assembled People

Will you support these persons by your prayer and example, and help them to grow in the knowledge and love of God?

People **We will.**

The Presider extends hands over the parents and sponsors and says

May God, our heavenly Father, grant you the power of the Holy Spirit to grow in faith and understanding that you may lead this child in the way of Christ. **Amen.**

The child is presented by name to the Presider, who, with the thumb, marks a cross on the forehead, saying

Reese, receive the sign of the Cross on your forehead and in your heart, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The parents then write their child's name in the book and return to their seats.

The Apostles' Creed

BCP 496

All standing, the Presider introduces the Creed with these words

In the assurance of eternal life given at Baptism, let us proclaim our faith and say,

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

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.

**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. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

CW alt.

The Presider says

Awake and alert for the advent of our Lord, let us pray for the grace to embrace the gentle rule of Christ.

The intercessor prays

Holy God, from whom the Spirit proceeds, empower your church, especially Sean, our Presiding Bishop; Sally, our Bishop; Andrew, our Priest; and all lay leaders so that they will reveal Christ's reign of justice and mercy in us, through us, and among us.

Come, Lord Jesus. **Amen. Maranatha.**

Holy God of wisdom and might, guide all people in positions of leadership, especially Donald, our President; Philip, our Governor; and Terrence, the mayor of this town; so that they will exercise their power for the common good.

Come, Lord Jesus. **Amen. Maranatha.**

Holy God, by whose word the cosmos was created, fill us with awe when we encounter the work of your hands so that we will tread gently and reverently on this good earth.

Come, Lord Jesus. **Amen. Maranatha.**

Holy God of compassion and love, bind up the broken-hearted, restore the sick and raise up the fallen.

Come, Lord Jesus. **Amen. Maranatha.**

Holy God, the source of light, let the radiance of God's coming dawn on all who live in darkness and the shadow of death.

Come, Lord Jesus. **Amen. Maranatha.**

Holy God of time and eternity, may we with all the saints in light shine forth as lights of the world.

Come, Lord Jesus. **Amen. Maranatha.**

The Presider adds the concluding collect.

Almighty Father, your Son came to us in humility as our savior, and at the last day he will come again in glory as our judge: Give us grace to turn away from darkness to the light of Christ that we will be ready to welcome him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Peace

BCP 360

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

The People greet one another in the Name of the Lord.

Announcements

Andrew Kruger

IV. Celebrating at the Lord's Table

Offertory Sentence

Romans 13:11

Presider The hour has come for you to wake from sleep.
For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.

Representatives of the congregation bring the people's offering of bread and wine to the Holy Table.



*The Ushers pass the collection plates among the people.
Another option is to give to Trinity online –
scan the QR code and go directly to our Breeze link.*

Offertory Anthem

“O Radiant Dawn” – James MacMillan

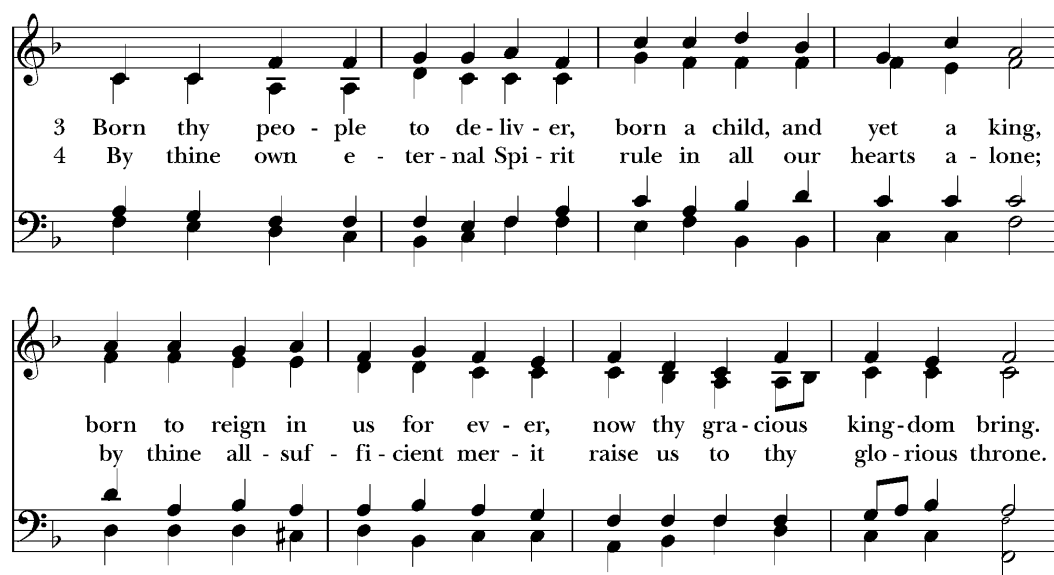
O Radiant Dawn, Splendor of eternal Light,
Sun of Justice: come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.
Isaiah had prophesied, the people who walked in darkness have seen the great light;
upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom, a light has shone. Amen.

The ushers bring the collection plates to the ministers and the People stand.

Offertory Hymn

Stuttgart

Hymnal 66



3 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king,
4 By thine own e - ter - nal Spi - rit rule in all our hearts a - lone;
born to reign in us for ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Presentation of Gifts

An Anglican Prayer Book 1989

Presider Source of all life, everything in heaven and on earth is yours:
People **All things come from you, and of your own do we give you. Amen.**

Eucharistic Prayer for Advent

Scottish Episcopal Church, 1982 alt

Presider *People*

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Presider *People*

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

Presider

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People

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; because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus

David Hurd

Hymnal S 124

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.

Glory and thanksgiving be to you, most loving Father. In Jesus you showed us yourself. Our hope is built on him, the first, the last, the living one. Obedient, even to accepting death, he opened the gate of glory and calls us now to share the life of heaven.

Before he was given up to suffering and death, alight with the vision of a feast that heralded a kingdom yet to come, at supper with his disciples he took bread and gave you thanks. He broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying: "Take, eat. This is my Body. It is broken for you."

After supper, he took the cup, again he offered you thanks, and gave it to them saying: "Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood of the new covenant; it is poured out for you, and for all, that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me."

Presider We obey your Son's command:

People **We recall Christ's blessed passion and death.**

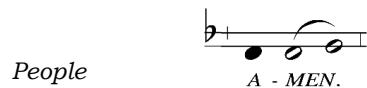
We celebrate Christ's glorious resurrection and ascension.

We look for the coming of Christ's Kingdom.

Made one with Christ, we offer you these gifts, and with them we offer ourselves, a single, holy, living sacrifice. Hear us, most merciful Father, and send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this wine. By the Spirit's life-giving power may they be for us the Body and Blood of your Son, and kindled by the fire of your love, may we be renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

Make us grow together in unity and love until at last, in your new creation, we enter our true eternal home, where with Mary the mother of our Lord, and the holy ancestors of every generation we will worship you in glory everlasting.

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.



The Lord's Prayer

BCP 364

Presider And now, 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.

Breaking of the Bread

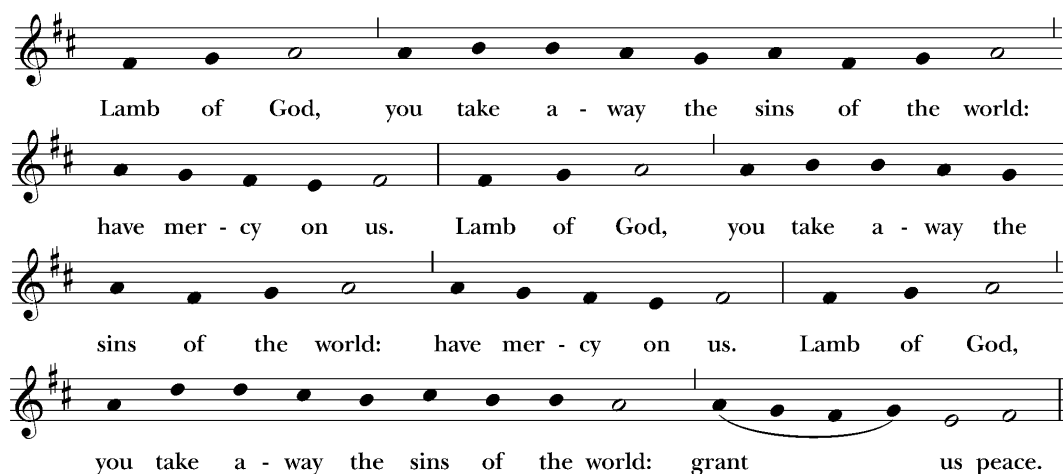
BCP 364

The Presider breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

Agnus Dei

David Hurd

Hymnal S 161



Presider The Gifts of God:
People **for the People of God.**

The ushers guide the people to receive Holy Communion. All who hunger for God, including children, are cordially invited to share the Gifts of God offered at this table.

Whoever you are, wherever you are in your life's journey, you are welcome here.

All persons may, but no person must, receive communion in both kinds to receive the full spiritual benefits of communion.

Wine is offered by way of a sip from the common cup. You may choose to receive only the host. Gluten-free wafers are available by request to the priest.

First Communion Hymn

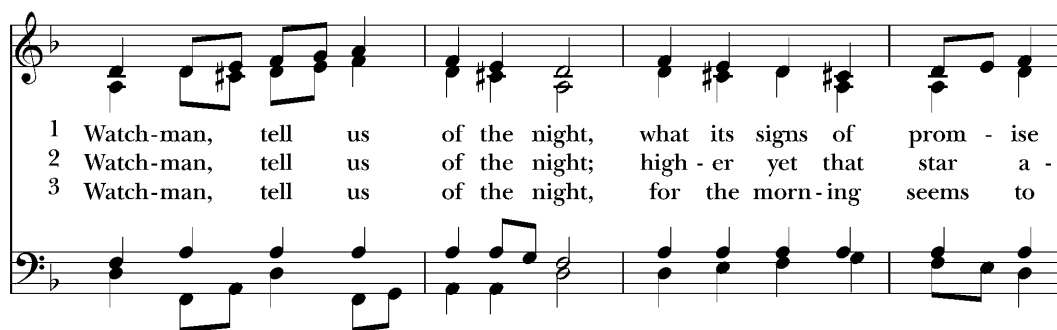
Winchester New

Hymnal 76

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

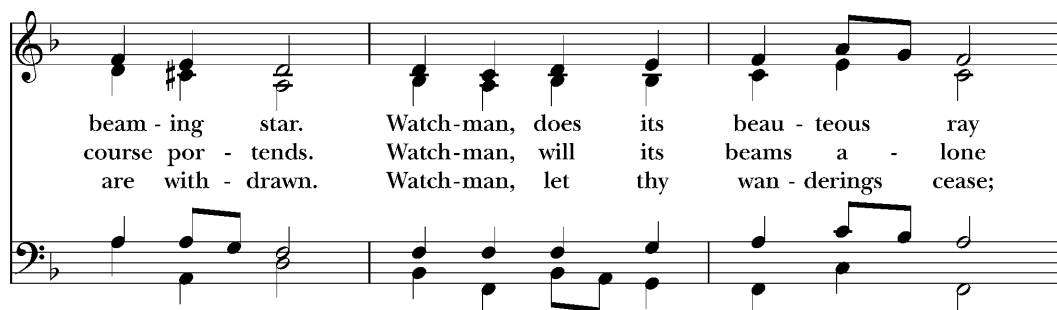
1 for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings.
2 pare a home where such a might - y guest may come.
3 waste a - way like flowers that with - er and de - cay.
4 light re - store earth's own true love - li - ness once more.
5 we a - dore and Ho - ly Spi - rit ev - er - more.



1 Watch-man, tell us of the night, what its signs of prom - ise
 2 Watch-man, tell us of the night; high - er yet that star a -
 3 Watch-man, tell us of the night, for the morn - ing seems to



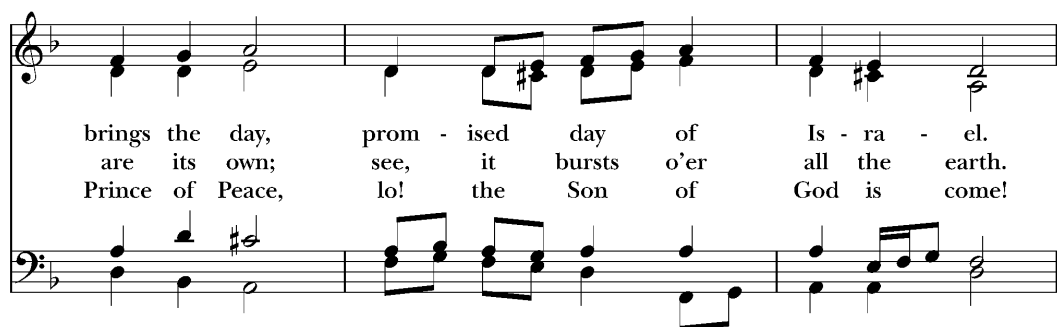
are. Trav - eler, o'er yon moun-tain's height, see that glo - ry -
 scends. Trav - eler, bless - ed - ness and light, peace and truth its
 dawn. Trav - eler, dark - ness takes its flight, doubt and ter - ror



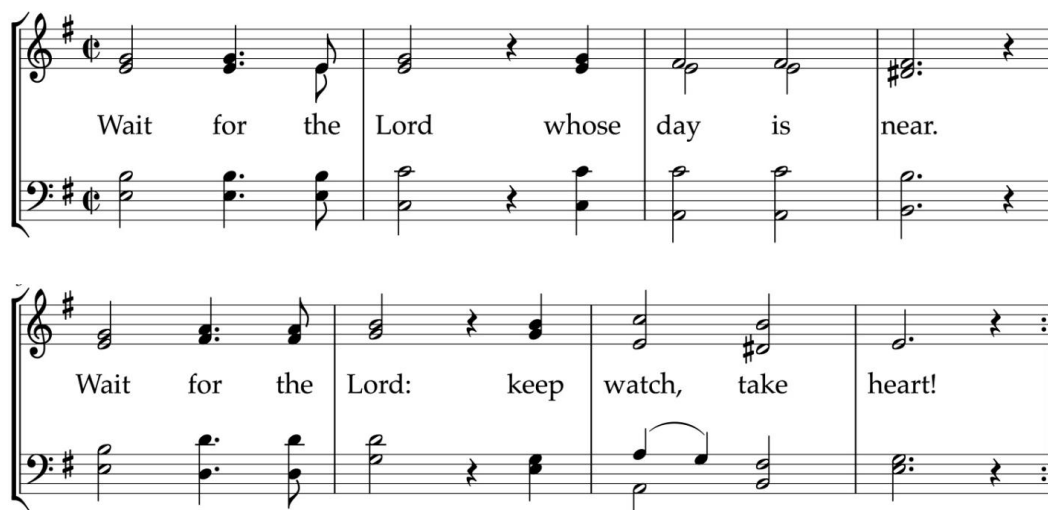
beam - ing star. Watch-man, does its beau - teous ray
 course por - tends. Watch-man, will its beams a - lone
 are with - drawn. Watch-man, let thy wan - derings cease;



aught of joy or hope fore - tell? Trav-eler, yes; it
 gild the spot that gave them birth? Trav-eler, a - ges
 hie thee to thy qui - et home. Trav-eler, lo! the



brings the day, prom - ised day of Is - ra - el.
 are its own; see, it bursts o'er all the earth.
 Prince of Peace, lo! the Son of God is come!



1. Prepare the way for the Lord. Make a straight path for God. (Is. 40)
2. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed. All the earth will see the Lord. (Is. 40)
3. Rejoice in the Lord always: God is at hand. Joy and gladness for all who seek the Lord. (Phil. 4, Ps. 70)
4. I waited for the Lord. God heard my cry. (Ps. 39)
5. Our eyes are fixed on the Lord our God. (Ps. 122)
6. Seek first the Kingdom of God. Seek and you shall find. (Matt. 6-7)
7. O Lord, show us your way. Guide us in your truth. (Ps. 118)

Post-communion Prayer

Celebrating Sunday

Presider Let us pray.

The People stand.

**Holy God, you draw near to us in word and sacrament
to strengthen and renew us.**

**Kindle in us the fire of your Spirit,
may your light so shine through us
that all may welcome your Son at his coming.**

We ask this in the name of Jesus our Emmanuel.

Amen.

Blessing

CW

May Christ, the Sun of righteousness shine upon you,
scatter the darkness from your path
and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory:
And the blessing of God almighty,
✠ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you, and remain with you always.

Amen.

V. Going out as God's People

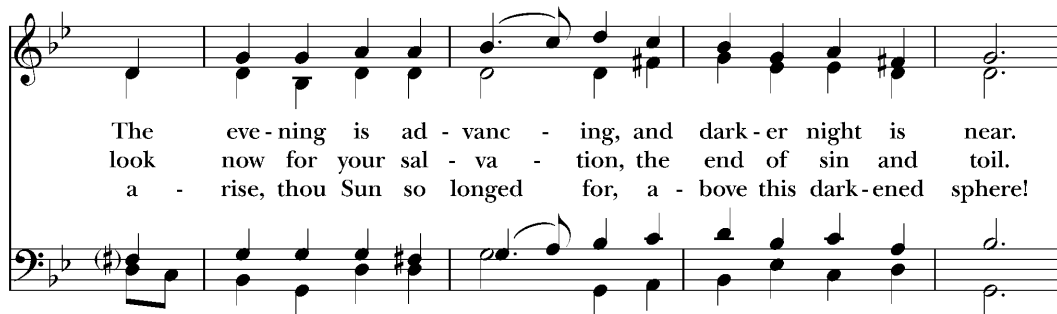
Sending Hymn

Llangloffan

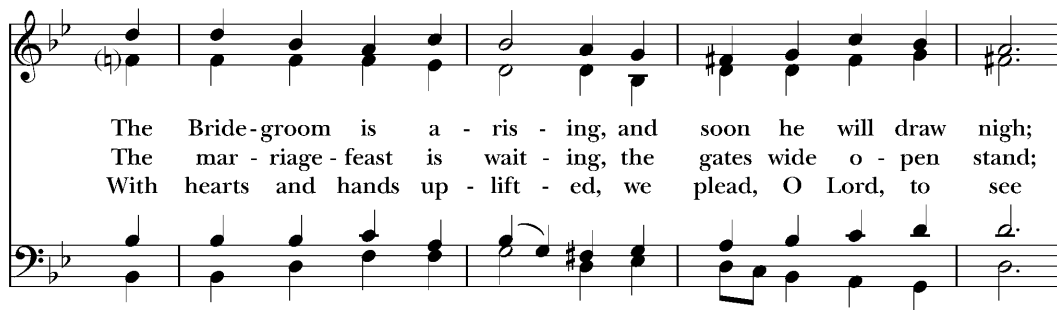
Hymnal 68



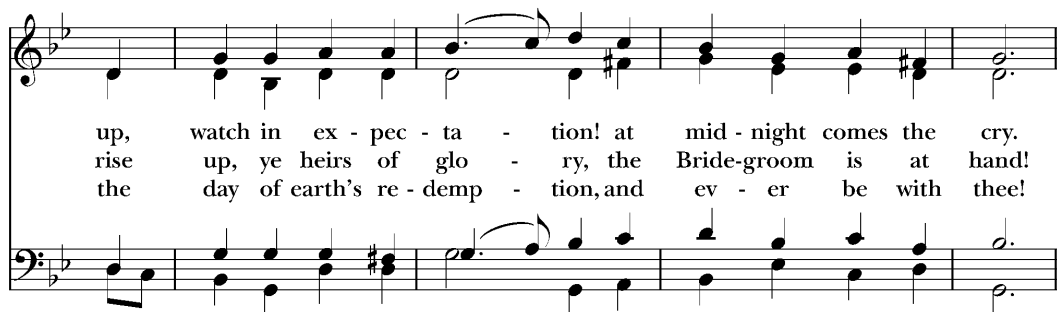
1 Re - joice! re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear!
2 See that your lamps are burn - ing, re - ple-nish them with oil;
3 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



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!

Dismissal

BCP 366

Presider

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Improvisation on *Llangloffan*

For Friends, Visitors and Newcomers

Welcome to Trinity Episcopal Church in Cranford, New Jersey. Thank you for joining us in worship. The bulletin is designed to make you feel at home and includes everything you need for the service (liturgy, hymns, rubrics, etc.). Please connect with us; introduce yourself to the ushers so they can make you feel more comfortable.

Father Andy is in the narthex (entrance) at the end of the service; it is an opportunity to connect on a more personal level. All are invited to Fellowship Hour in Sherlock Hall immediately after the service. An email blast is sent every Thursday by 2 PM with hyperlinks to sign-up sheets, methods to contribute to the parish or other charitable organizations, ways to contact individuals or receive information on events, etc. Please contact the parish office to receive it or alternative methods of communication.

What you need to know today...

Christmas Pageant Rehearsals Children will receive the blessing as usual during the 10 AM service, and then move to Sherlock Hall.

Christmas Cookie Fellowship Hour In Sherlock Hall, immediately after this service; coffee, tea and snacks are provided. Today; enjoy treats made by fellow parishioners.

Children's Choir Rehearsal today at 11:30 AM in the church.

Sanctuary Candle During Advent, while there are no flowers on the altar, we can still remember our loved ones and the attributions on the front cover will read as follows: "The Sanctuary Candle is given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of _____."

Christmas Flowers As part of the preparation for celebrating the Nativity of Our Lord, please contribute towards this year's flowers. The deadline is today. Envelopes marked for this purpose are in the narthex of the church. Alternatively, give to Trinity online and write 'Christmas Flowers' in the memo line. All remembrances must be logged online by completing the form which can be accessed via the QR code. Loved one's names will be on the Christmas bulletins and will be prayed for at Morning Prayer during the season of Christmas.



Youth Representative Applications are being accepted for this appointed position on the Trinity Vestry. Open to high school students in their sophomore or junior year to represent the youth of the parish. See email blast to apply by today.

Cranford HS Madrigal Choir Holiday CD Today through Christmas Eve, the session recorded at Trinity in December 2024 will be on sale. See Anthony Rafaniello after the 8 AM or 10 AM services to purchase. Each CD is \$25; cash, check made out to "Cranford High School" or Venmo (@CranfordChoir). Proceeds support the Cranford HS Choir Program.

What you need to know this week...

The Daily Offices Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer are offered online from Monday to Friday at 8:30 AM and 5 PM.

Parish Office Parish Administrator Marion Nechuta is in Tuesday (12 noon-2:30 PM), Wednesday (1 PM-3:30 PM) and Thursday (12 noon-2:30 PM). Father Andy's sabbath day is Friday.

Handbells and Choir Rehearsals This Wednesday, December 17; rehearsal for Handbells is 7 to 7:50 PM and Adult Choir is 8-9 PM.

Fellowship Luncheon This Thursday, December 18 from 12:30 to 2:30 PM in Witherington Hall. TEDs students and the Cranford High School Madrigal Choir will be singing Christmas Carols and will serenade while Shepherd's Pie (beef) is served – everyone's favorite Luncheon. Call Susan Olszewski (908-757-9561) or Susan Nelson (908-397-3944) for questions or to help.

Compline Thursdays at 8 PM online. A contemplative Office that emphasizes spiritual peace.

What you need to know in the future...

St. John's Sandwich Sunday December 20; people are needed to make sandwiches after the services and deliver them to St. John's in Elizabeth. Sandwich donation items needed are listed in this week's email blast. Food bags will be made on Saturday, December 19 in Sherlock Hall from 10 to 11 AM. Only sandwich bags are being accepted at this time, no additional food items or clothing. To help, please contact Marion Nechuta (marionnechuta@yahoo.com) or Helen Shteynberg (hshteynberg@gmail.com).

Vestry Meeting Sunday, December 21 at 11:30 AM; note date change.

Martin Luther King Jr. Thursday, January 15 at 7 PM at St. Mark's AME Church, Cranford. Highschoolers are invited to submit an essay on MLK; the winner will be read during this annual Cranford MLK service. Details may be viewed in the weekly email blast.

Annual Parish Meeting Sunday, January 25, 2026 following one service at 10 AM. Reports are due by Sunday, January 4.

Diocesan Convention Follow-Up: Migration with Dignity

On November 22, 2025, our Diocesan Convention passed **Resolution 242-1, *Migration with Dignity*** which “[calls] upon Episcopalians in the Diocese to advocate for the passage of **S3672/A4987 the New Jersey Immigrant Trust Act** which would legally establish some Migration with Dignity principles within our State.”

The Immigrant Trust Act (ITA)

- Protects personal information by limiting the circumstances under which public agencies can collect information related to immigration status
- Requires public schools, health care facilities, libraries, and shelters to adopt model policies to help people feel safer seeking the public services for which they are eligible
- Prohibits state and local law enforcement from cooperating with federal immigration authorities when doing so is voluntary under federal law.

Following the call of our Convention, you are urged to contact legislators to advocate for its passage now. Resources, including key legislators to contact, phone numbers, and sample scripts for phone calls are on the Diocesan website (this resources was created for a “Phone Zap” on a day in November, but the information is still accurate to the best of our knowledge). The ITA has been assigned to Committees in both Houses, but hearings have yet to be held. The Senate President, Assembly Speaker, and the two Committee Chairs have crucial power in moving the ITA forward.

If you'd like further information on the ITA, please contact the Rev. Jack Zamboni (jzamboni@juno.com).

Advent, Christmas and Epiphany Worship Schedule

Sunday, December 14	Third Sunday of Advent	8 AM, Rite I and 10 AM, Rite II
Sunday, December 21	Fourth Sunday of Advent	8 AM, Rite I and 10 AM, Rite II
Wednesday, December 24	Christmas Pageant	4:30 PM Rite II Eucharist with the blessing of the creche
Wednesday, December 24	Lessons & Carols	10:30 PM Traditional Anglican feast of music and scripture
Thursday, December 25	Christmas Day	9 AM One single worship service, Rite I
Sunday, December 28	First Sunday after Christmas	9 AM One single worship service, Rite II
Sunday, January 4	Epiphany (observed)	8 AM Rite I Eucharist and 10 AM Rite II Eucharist
Sunday, January 11	Baptism of our Lord	8 AM Rite I Eucharist and 10 AM Rite II Eucharist

Lectionary & Liturgy

The Third Sunday of Advent again has as its central theme the ministry of John the Baptist. Jesus said of him, “Among those born of women there has risen no one greater than John the Baptist...” In today’s Gospel, John, who has been imprisoned by Herod Antipas, is facing death and wishes to know before he dies that he was correct in identifying Jesus as the Messiah. Jesus’ reply is to quote from the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah, demonstrating that he is indeed fulfilling the Messiah’s ministry as Isaiah had foretold.

The Old Testament reading is the passage Jesus quotes in the Gospel reading. The sign of the Messiah is a new order of existence—God’s Kingdom—in which health and salvation spring forth. The second reading is a call to patient waiting for the Lord to appear to inaugurate the kingdom of God.

The distinction between John and even the least in the kingdom—ourselves—who are even greater, is that our birth is more than natural—it is the new birth by water and the spirit in Holy Baptism, which has made us members of the Body of Christ. We are commissioned for ministry in Baptism; a ministry like that of Jesus. In Holy Eucharist, we affirm our commitment to that ministry to all people, which is the ongoing sign of Christ in the world.

.From The Rite Light: Reflections on the Sunday Readings and Seasons of the Church Year. © 2007 by Michael W. Merriman. Church Publishing Inc. NY

- † **Cover Art** – Alvise Vivarini’s *St. John the Baptist* refers to several depictions of the saint by the Venetian Renaissance painter, most notably a slim panel painting (c. 1480) in the Denver Art Museum, known for its cool tones and solitary figure, and a figure within the larger Altarpiece of St. Ambrose, finished by Marco Basaiti, where John stands beside St. Ambrose in the Church of San Pietro Martire (Murano). Vivarini often depicted this saint, sometimes alongside St. Matthew, using detailed hand studies for his figures, creating evocative, characteristic works.
- † **Gathering Chant** – Words & Music: James J. Chepponis. “Dedicated to Michael McGrath. Verses are based on the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (December 8) but can also be used as general Advent verses.” –[©1995 GIA Publications]
- † **Service Music** – Dr. David Hurd (b. 1950), composer, concert organist, choral director and educator; professor at General Theological Seminary for 28 years. Presently Director of Music at Church of Saint Mary the Virgin in Times Square, NYC. –[© 1981 GIA Publications]

- † **Collect** – The present revision restores the prayer to a form close to the original by Thomas Cranmer; it echoes Psalm 80:2 and Hebrews 12:1 and sets forth the themes of the two advents: the first in which He came in humility to save, and the second in which He comes in power to help and relieve. –[*Notes on the American Prayer Book*, Marion Hatchett]
- † **Proclaiming Hymn** – Words: Philip Doddridge (1702-1751); his “hymns were written as summaries of his sermons and to help the congregation respond to the truths they were taught.” –[*Christian Classics Ethereal Library*] He suffered from tuberculosis, and when a patron offered to finance a trip to Lisbon for his health, he said, “I can as well go to heaven from Lisbon as from Northampton.” He died in Lisbon soon after his arrival. –[Bert Polman] Music: Thomas Haweis (1734-1820); a florid tune originally published in his *Carmina Christo*. Samuel Webbe, Jr., adapted & shortened it and named it after Rev. Leigh Richmond, a friend of Haweis’s.
- † **Gospel** – The Christian gospel, for Augustine, wasn’t just the answer to an intellectual question (though it was that); it was like a shelter in a storm, a port for a wayward soul, nourishment for a prodigal hungering, whose own heart had become, he said, “a famished land.” It was, he said, like someone had finally shown him his home country, even though he had never been there.
- † **Prayers of the People** – Adapted from “Leading Intercessions: Prayers for Sundays, Holy Days and Festivals and for Special Services Years A, B & C” by Raymond Chapman. Prayers reflect the Bible readings of the day, creating a more integrated act of worship. The prayer leader represents before God all those who are present so that at the close of the prayer all can say with integrity the ancient word of assent: *Amen*. It is a Hebrew word that has come down untranslated through Greek and Latin into English. Virtually every other language Christians speak has similarly made room for this untranslated term. Often said to mean “so be it.”
- † **Maranatha** – An Aramaic phrase meaning “Our Lord, come!” or “Our Lord has come”. It is a Christian expression of hope and anticipation for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The term appears in the New Testament as a closing to St. Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, and it is often used as a prayer and a rallying cry by early Christians.
- † **Offertory Anthem** – Words: Anonymous, traditional Advent antiphon. Music: Sir James MacMillan (b. 1959); 2007, from the *Strathclyde Motets II*, dedicated to the Choir of St Columba’s Church, Glasgow. –[© 2008 Boosey & Hawkes] The text (in English) is one of the “Great O” antiphons which are used on the seven days approaching Christmas. “Fervent longing for Christ is a prominent sentiment. ‘Come’ is repeated again and again as an ascending sequence, with crescendoing dynamics and increasing suspensions emphasizing the desperation of the people. The opening incorporates his characteristic ornamented vocal lines, later echoed in the final cadence, and their resolution from dissonance to consonance here may be an intentional musical representation of the conflicts resolved by Jesus’ coming.” –[Ghislaine Reece-Trapp © 2019]
- † **Offertory Hymn** – Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788). Music: melody from *Psalmodia Sacra, oder Andchtige und Schöne Gesang*, 1715 and now attributed to Christian Friedrich Witt; adapt. and harm. William Henry Havergal (1793-1870).
- † **First Communion Hymn** – Words: Charles Coffin (1676-1749); originally written in Latin, early translators thought the text medieval. Coffin was principal of the college at Beauvais, 1712 and rector of the University of Paris, 1718. His hymns are described as having less brilliancy, but more simplicity and unction. –[John Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology* (1907)] Music: melody from *Musicalisches Hand-Buch*, 1690; harm. William Henry Monk (1823-1889).
- † **Second Communion Hymn** – Words: Sir John Bowring (1792–1872) was a British political economist, traveler, writer, literary translator, polyglot and the fourth Governor of Hong Kong. Music: Joseph Parry (1841-1903); composed in 1876, this is his best known hymn tune, and named after the Welsh seaside resort where he was teaching
- † **Communion Meditation** – Words & Music: Jacques Berthier, Taizé Community –[©1986, 1991, Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc.]
- † **Sending Hymn** – Words: Laurentius Laurenti (1660-1722), a well-known writer of German hymns in the Pietist tradition, which are founded on the Gospels for Sundays and Festivals, and they draw out the bearing on the Christian life of the leading thoughts therein contained. They are of noble simplicity and are Scriptural, fervent, and often of genuine poetical worth. They were published in *Evangelia Melodica* (1700). Music: A Welsh hymn melody, its original key is g minor.
- † **Book of Common Prayer** – “The United States BCP is not and never has been under copyright. So all are basically free to copy at will and it is absolutely completely permissible to post the book on Wikisource and other sites. Since there is no copyright, content control is done through the certificate at the beginning of the book.”

Introduction to the Advent Liturgy at Trinity

Every liturgical year begins with the season of Advent. The word “advent” is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, which literally means “coming.” Bernard of Clairvaux summarized the theology of Advent with reference to the three comings of Christ – past, present and future: “In the first, Christ was our redemption; in the last he will appear as our life; in this middle coming, he is our rest and our consolation.” Traditionally the color for Advent has been purple. This has led many congregations to think of Advent as a mini-Lent replete with penitence and abstinence thus obscuring the central themes of the hope and expectation in Advent. In recent times there has been a growing use of blue – the color that represents Mary, the mother of our Lord – in Advent. At the heart of Advent is the theme of hope and expectation in the midst of waiting.

Therefore, the Season of Advent invites us to craft our Liturgy in ways that reflect and elevate the themes of alert, expectant preparation. For this reason, this service includes a ritual for lighting the candles of the Advent Wreath and Advent-styled Prayers of the People. The successive lighting of the candles of the Advent wreath will take a central role in our liturgy. Our Advent wreath is made up of blue candles (the liturgical color for Advent) in a circle of evergreens. The circle has no beginning or end, reminding us of God’s unending love for us. The evergreens are a sign of life in an otherwise lifeless winter. The focus of the candle lighting centers on the increasing light of God in the world. As has become our custom, the sanctuary is adorned with two evergreen trees. While these trees foreshadow Christmas celebrations, their primary symbolism is that of hope and life in the midst of a winter landscape. The “call and response” for the Prayers of the People will include the word *Maranatha*, an Aramaic word that means “the Lord is coming” or “come, O Lord.” It was the common greeting among our brothers and sisters in the early church who were eagerly expecting the second coming of Christ.

Advent; the prophets’ season

With the ubiquitous displays of Santa themed decor, and the relentless playlist of carols, you’d be forgiven for assuming that we’re already in the season of Christmas. But actually, and quite wonderfully, we are in the midst of the season of Advent. Advent is a season of expectant hope and prophetic vigilance. The collect appointed for this Sunday reminds us to heed the warnings of the prophets whom God has sent. The Biblical prophets are always alert to what is leading their societies to health, and what aspects of their culture foreshadow brokenness.

I’m convinced that one of the most critical prophetic warnings needed in our time is the sinister direction in which technology is taking humanity. My own capitulation with technology – I’m writing this on a MacBook with an Apple Watch strapped to my wrist – leaves me in need of repentance. I’m old enough to remember when we were promised that email would save us hours of time: no more faxing, or opening and replying to letters. Now we spend, by some estimates, thirty days a year on email alone, and it is increasingly impossible to be out of touch with anyone, anywhere.

This is the devil’s bargain of the technological society, and we have been falling for it for a long time: embrace the new, lose the old, and find yourself more deeply entwined in a technological web from which you cannot extricate yourself even if you want to. We only have to look at what screens are doing to our children for even the most oblivious parent to feel a shiver of unease. A compelling contemporary prophetic voice on this subject is Paul Kingsnorth, whose recent book *Against the Machine: On the Unmaking of Humanity* is a most worthwhile read in this season of Advent.

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