

Fifth Sunday of Advent
10:00 AM + December 14th, 2025



Welcome!

You are invited to participate fully in our worship. Whoever you are, wherever you are on your journey of faith, welcome!

The Holy Eucharist: Rite Two

Prelude: Hymn Tune Voluntary on *Picardy*

Opening Hymn: "Come, thou long-expected Jesus"

arr. Alec Rowley

Blue Hymnal 66

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

People: **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

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.**

Kyrie: "Lord, have mercy upon us"

Blue Hymnal S 91

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Let us pray

The Collect

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.

A Reading from **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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 146:4-9

Based on *Veni Emmanuel* - Thomas Pavlechko

4 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their **help!** *
whose hope is in the LORD their **God;**

5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is **in them;** *
who keeps his promise for **ever;**

6 Who gives justice to those who are **oppressed,** *
and food to those who **hunger.**

7 The LORD sets the prisoners free;
the LORD opens the eyes of the **blind;** *
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed **down;**

Response. O come, O come Emmanuel

8 The LORD loves the righteous; the LORD cares for the **stranger**; *
he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the **wicked**.

9 The LORD shall reign for **ever**, *
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. **Hallelujah!**

Response. O come, O come Emmanuel

A reading from the Book of 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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God

Sequence Hymn: "O for a thousand tongues to sing" Blue Hymnal 493
(vv. 1-4 before Gospel; vv. 5 & 6 after)

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew 11:2-11

People's response before the Gospel **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."

People's response after the Gospel

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon

Sean Maloney

The Nicene Creed

Spoken by all, standing.

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 – [from Hear Our Prayer: Prayers of the People for the Revised Common Lectionary] *The Leader and People pray responsively*

O Lord who has created and loved us and who calls to us be still and wait. Heed our prayers as we say, Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Help us to hear and to accept gratefully your call to be God's people ignoring the glory and favor of this world in favor of the glory of the kingdom of God. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Turn us away from our fears and division and teach us to embrace your promise, that ours might be a nation of hope and generosity. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Open our eyes to the majesty of your creation and strengthen our resolve to preserve its abundance for the sustenance of all future generations. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lead us to where your loving presence is most needed and help us to be your agents of love to our neighbors. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Enter into the lives of all who suffer, that they might draw strength from your presence. [Especially we ask for your healing powers in the lives of ...*prayer list.*] Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Deal tenderly with those who are grieving and with those whose wounds from loss are reopened at this time of year. May we feel the assurance of your promises that we will be reunited in your glorious presence in the new age. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, in the face of Christ we see the fullness of your love for us, help us to be the people you created us to be and to live fully in the light of your countenance. All this we ask in the name of Lord, Jesus Christ who with You and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, One God, now and always. **Amen.**

Confession of Sin

Celebrant: Let us confess our sins to God.

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.

Absolution

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the

grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.
Amen.

The Peace *All stand*

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you**

Announcements:

Offertory Hymn: "Watchman, tell us of the night" Blue Hymnal 640

The Holy Communion:

Eucharistic Prayer D

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is truly right to glorify you, Father, and to give you thanks; for you alone are God, living and true, dwelling in light inaccessible from before time and for ever.

Fountain of life and source of all goodness, you made all things and fill them with your blessing; you created them to rejoice in the splendor of your radiance.

Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day; and, beholding the glory of your presence, they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them, and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we acclaim you, and glorify your Name, as we sing (say),

Sanctus: "Holy, holy, holy"

Blue Hymnal S 114

We acclaim you, holy Lord, glorious in power. Your mighty works reveal your wisdom and love. You formed us in your own image, giving the whole world into our care, so that, in obedience to you, our Creator, we might rule and serve all your creatures. When our disobedience took us far from you, you did not abandon us to the power of death. In your mercy you came to our help, so that in seeking you we might find you. Again and again you called us into covenant with you, and through the prophets you taught us to hope for salvation.

Father, you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our Savior. Incarnate by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, he lived as one of us, yet without sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners, freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. To fulfill your purpose he gave himself up to death; and, rising from the grave, destroyed death, and made the whole creation new.

And, that we might live no longer for ourselves, but for him who died and rose for us, he sent the Holy Spirit, his own first gift for those who believe, to complete his work in the world, and to bring to fulfillment the sanctification of all.

When the hour had come for him to be glorified by you, his heavenly Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end; at supper with them he 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."

Father, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption. Recalling Christ's death and his descent among the dead, proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand, awaiting his coming in glory; and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us, this bread and this cup, we praise you and we bless you.

**We praise you, we bless you,
we give thanks to you,
and we pray to you, Lord our God.**

Lord, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us, and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ.

Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ, to the praise of your Name.

Remember, Lord, your one holy catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of your Christ. Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace.

Grant that we may find our inheritance with [the Blessed Virgin Mary, with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, (with _____) and] all the saints who have found favor with you in ages past. We praise you in union with them and give you glory through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

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.**

The Breaking of the Bread

Fraction Anthem: "O Lamb of God"

Blue Hymnal S 158

Celebrant: Alleluia, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
People: **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

Celebrant and People

Post Communion Prayer

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Closing Hymn: "On Jordan's bank, the Baptist's cry" Blue Hymnal 76

The Dismissal

Celebrant: Let us go forth rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit!
Alleluia, Alleluia, **ALLELUIA.**

People: **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia, ALLELUIA.**

Postlude: Magnificat sexti toni

Johann Pachelbel

Thank you for joining us today!

If you would like to receive our weekly e-bulletin, please contact the church office (aschurch@allsaintschelmsford.org) To learn more about us, visit <https://www.all saints chelmsford.org> or call us at 978 256 5673.
