



Celtic Evensong and Communion

Second Sunday of Advent

7 December 2025 4:00 pm

*We come from many places to be together for a little while.
Each of us brings our own experience and traditions to this gathering.
So here in this place, let us take time together to encounter the holy.
Please remember to silence all devices.*

The Opening Rite

Opening Musical Meditation

What is the crying at Jordan?

Opening Meditation

When Jesus comes into the life of the world
with something unplanned, overwhelming,
something that makes a colossal difference,
we long for it, and yet we don't quite know
what it's going to involve.
But this is a bit odd, isn't it, you might say.
Surely Jesus has come into the world
and by now we ought to know
what sort of difference he's made.
But the truth is
we don't yet know the difference Jesus might make.
We know some of the difference he's made
to our lives as individuals,
to the life of the Christian community,
the Church, to the whole world.
And yet there's more.
We're still waiting to see what might happen
if Jesus was allowed into our lives
that bit more fully; that bit more radically.
John the Baptist says,
"Yes...something is about to happen
and you've very little idea what it is
and you've no idea
how radical and complete a change it will involve....
Everything you've always hoped for,
everything you've longed for,
the change, the freedom, the peace,
is about to come....
Get yourself ready."

~ Rowan Williams, from "A Reflection on Advent" in *Darkness Yielding: Liturgies, Prayers and Reflections for Advent, Christmas, Holy Week and Easter*, pp. 6-9.

A Prayer for the Turning of Hearts

Most Holy God, in the midst of this season of new life, we confess:

We have resisted the light of your love;

we have not fully shared the gifts entrusted to us;

and we have not treasured the gifts of others around us.

We stand in need of your love.

Holy Father, make us holy. Holy Jesus, make us holy. Holy Spirit, make us holy.

Holy God, make us whole. Amen.

The Invitatory and Psalter

The glory of the Lord shall be revealed

And all flesh shall see it together.

Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping;

that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace.

Glory to the Source, Wisdom, and Breath of Creation, as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. Amen.

Song to the Light



Light of the world, in grace and beauty,

Mirror of God's eternal face,

Transparent flam of love's free duty,

You bring salvation to our race.

Now, as we see the lights of evening,

We raise our voice in hymns of praise;

Worthy are you of endless blessing,

Sun of our night, lamp of our days.

Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19



- 1 Give *thē* King your *j*ustice, Ó God, *
and your righteousness / to the Kíng's Son;
- 2 That he may rule your *p*éople *r*ighteously *
and the / poor with *j*ustice;
- 3 That the mountains may bring prosperity *tó* the *p*éople, *
and the little / hills bring *r*ighteousness.
- 4 He shall defend the needy *amó*ng the *p*éople; *
he shall rescue the poor and crush / the oppr^éssor.
- 5 He shall live as long as the *s*ún and *m*óon endure, *
from one generation / to *a*nóther.

- 6 He shall come down like rain upón the mówn field, *
like showers that / water thē earth.
- 7 In his time shall the ríghteous flóurish; *
there shall be abundance of peace till the / moon shall bē no more.
- 18 Blessed be the Lord GOD, the Gód of Ísrael, *
who a/lone does wöndrous deeds!
- 19 And blessed be his glorious Náme for éver! *
and may all the earth be filled with his glory.
/ Amen. Ámen. [Ant.]

Glory to the Holy Trinity, as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. Amen.

The Lessons and Reflection

Listen now to the Word of God

The First Lesson

Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

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

Thanks be to God.

Musical Response

Comfort, comfort ye

The Second Lesson

Matthew 3:1-12

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after

me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God among us, and for the Word of God within us,
Thanks be to God.

Reflection

Kathleen Tone

Music after the Reflection

Ar hyd y nos

Affirmation

As children of God, we affirm:

**That God, who is Love, created all and called it good,
that God is present with all of creation,
and that, in darkness and in light, God is faithful;
therefore we, too, seek to be faithful.**

**That Jesus came to show us Love with a human face,
that he taught justice and reconciliation and suffered on our behalf,
and that through his faithful example, he embodies hope;
therefore we, too, seek to be people of justice, reconciliation, and hope.**

**That the Holy Spirit guides and accompanies us,
that this same Spirit offers wisdom and discernment,
and that, when we are open, the Spirit can always find a way;
therefore we, seek to be people filled with God’s Spirit:
discerning, loving, and transforming our world. Amen.**

The Prayers

Prayers for Ourselves and Others

Let us pray that all may live in unity, peace, and concord.

Lord, have mercy.

Upon all who suffer from dissensions and quarrels,

Christ, have mercy.

That all leaders strive for justice and peace.

Lord, have mercy.

For our deepest and most holy longings we pray:

Renew us, O God.

For all who wander, who hunger, who thirst:

Renew us as people of service and compassion.

For this planet, our home:

Renew our will to be healers of creation.

For this and every nation:

Renew in all people the will for good and the longing for peace.

For those whom we hold in our hearts:

Here, the people may add their intercessions or thanksgivings either silently or aloud.

Bless these and all creation with your goodness,

and renew our trust in your love. Amen.

The Collect of the Day

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A Collect for Advent

God of hope, as we prepare for the coming of your Son, awaken our hearts to you this Advent season, so that when Christ arrives, we are ready to receive him with all our hearts, all our minds, and all our strength. **Amen.**

A Collect for Ambrose of Milan

O God, who gave your servant Ambrose grace eloquently to proclaim your righteousness in the great congregation and fearlessly to bear reproach for the honor of your Name: Mercifully grant to all bishops and pastors such excellence in preaching and faithfulness in ministering your Word, that your people may be partakers with them of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Leader Jesus says, "Come to me you who are troubled and I will give you rest." So come, you who are broken in body or in spirit, you who are torn by relationships and doubt, you who feel deeply within yourselves the divisions of the world. Come, for Jesus invites us to bring our brokenness.

*From now until the end of the service, you are invited to come to the Lady Altar
and light a candle and kneel at the rail for prayers.
There is a healing space at the back of the Lady Chapel for you.
Please move about as the Spirit leads you.*

Music during Prayers

Winter Sky

Hymn #65 in *The Hymnal 1982*

Prepare the way, O Zion

The Grace

Holy One, whose coming we await, we lift our hearts to you. May we set down the tasks of the day so that we may arise renewed to love and serve you. **Amen.**

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

The Holy Communion

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 God thanks and praise.**

Celebrant It is our joy and delight to give you thanks and praise, Emmanuel, God with us. We give you thanks and praise for you hallowing of human flesh. We rejoice at your light which shines out of darkness and enlightens all who seek you. We praise you that you brought forth new life in the family of Mary

and Joseph as you do today from all who faithfully await the fulfillment of your word. We praise you that you were known first by poor shepherds and wise seekers as you are known today by the poor and outcast. We rejoice with the angels at your promise of peace for those who trust in you. We rejoice that the extraordinary is given birth in the ordinary places of life.

So with the angels who sing “Glory” and with all the saints and ancestors who have known you to be with us, we sing together,

All **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Celebrant We bless you for Jesus, born of the Spirit’s love and a woman’s body and blood. We bless you for Jesus who shows us how to live the fullness of our humanity and thus become one with you. We remember Jesus who laughed and wept and felt tiredness and fear; who praise Mary when she anointed him for death and blessed a woman of the city who washed his feet with tears. We remember Jesus who touched lepers and the sick and feasted with tax collectors and sinners. We remember Christ who lives on in all who courageously and faithfully bring forth the light of your love in earth’s darkest places.

We remember Jesus who, on the night before he died, shared a meal with his friends. He took bread, blessed it, and broke it and gave it to them saying:

All **“Take and eat. This is my own body given for you. Do this to remember me.”**

Celebrant After supper he took a cup of wine, gave thanks, and gave it to them saying:

All **“This is my life-blood, given for you. Do this to remember me.”**

Celebrant So we proclaim the mystery of faith:

All **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Celebrant O God who is known to us in human flesh, send your Holy Spirit on us and on these material things of bread and wine, that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ, and we may be the body of Christ, food and life for the world. We ask these things through Christ, with whom and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, be glory now and forever

All **Amen.**

The Lord’s Prayer

The Breaking of the Bread

The Invitation

Celebrant This is the table, not of the Church, but of the Lord.
It is made ready for those who love him and for those who want to love him more.
So come, you who have much faith and you who have little,
You who have been here often, and you who have not been here long,
you who have tried to follow and you who have failed.
Come, because it is the Lord who invites you.
It is his will that those who want him should meet him here.

Communion

Concluding Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you have put your life into our hands; now we put our lives into yours. Take us, renew us, and remake us. What we have been is past; what we shall be, through you, still awaits us. Lead us on. Take us with you. Amen.

Blessing

May this new night of rest repair the wear of time, restore your vision of a deeper light, heal the wounds of disappointments, and restore youth of heart for the adventure that awaits you tomorrow. And may the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Dismissal

May the Lord grant us a peaceful night and a perfect end.
Thanks be to God.

Concluding Musical Meditation

Galician Carol

— Worship Leaders —

The Rev. Sarah A. Conner
Kathleen Tone
Ryan Patten, Grayson Davison, Lisa Duffy
Paul Massari
Kathleen Tone
Joanna Troy
Christine Reichert

Presider
Opening
Musicians
Lector
Reflection
Prayers
Usher

Our Prayers are offered for

Margaret Connor, Barbara Dwyer, Lilyann, John Gilbo, Vance Gilbert, Reny Sparapani, Laurel, Gary Young, Amy, Paul, Heather and Prescott, Ariana, Sheridan, Javy, Faith Aroko and Family, Jesse Hurst and Family, Maureen Joyce, Arthur, Deb Young, Cindy Rhodes, Ron, Allison Mascolo, Melissa Glassman, Max Joyce, Marc Britt, those battling cancer, Mel, Corey MacNeil, Dianne, Jenny, Loretta and Kris, Priscilla Lemons, Deb Papps, Derek Fuller and Family, for the peaceful repose of the soul of Smadar and all victims of war the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and their ministries; the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Salem, the Salem Public Schools and for an end to racism, war, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, gun violence and oppression. In thanksgiving, we pray for the ministry of The Reverend Debbie Phillips and her husband, Eric Wagner, this community of faith, for God's grace and forgiveness, for those with the courage to stand up to tyranny, for creation, for the diversity of people, and for all the blessings of this life.

If you have additions or deletions to the prayer list, please email prayerlist@gracechurchsalem.org by Tuesday at noon for publication in that week's e-news. The Parish Prayer List is read aloud each Wednesday at Morning Prayer.

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UPCOMING Events



THE LONGEST
Night
SERVICE

SUNDAY DECEMBER 21ST
4:00 PM

A safe space for those who
grieve or feel overwhelmed in
this season.

with Celtic Evensong
& Communion

A lit candle with a yellow flame and a white wax body, positioned in the bottom right corner of the poster.



Christmas Eve

4:00 pm Pickup Pageant & Eucharist



Come at 3:15 and choose your costume -
all children of any age are welcome!

8:00 pm Candlelight Choral Eucharist



*~There will be no service
on Christmas Day~*

Christmas Memorials and Thanksgivings

Each Christmas, we make an offering in thanksgiving or as a memorial to be recognized during all our Christmas services.

Inserted in this week's bulletin is a slip for you to list your name, the name or event which is being remembered, and the amount of gift. You may also go to our "Donate" button on the website and then send an email to office@gracechurchsalem.org with the information.

For inclusion in the Christmas leaflets, the names must be submitted by **Monday, December 22** at noon.

LOOKING FOR WAYS TO HELP?



Donate a \$25 grocery store gift card to the Salem YMCA!
The YMCA will distribute cards to Salem community members who have lost their SNAP benefits. Cards can be brought to the front desk at the Salem YMCA, located at 1 Sewall Street. **978-744-0351**

Donate to The Salem Pantry!
Both dollars and volunteers will help meet increased demand.
No food donations, please!
thesalempantry.org





Support the United Way of Massachusetts Bay!
In partnership with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, United Way is responding to these direct threats to SNAP.
unitedwaymassbay.org/

Spread the word!
Share the food security resources on Salem Food Policy Council with your networks.
Salemfoodpolicy.com

 Salem Public School and Salem Academy students receive **free** school breakfast and lunch. Students who stay after school can also have dinner at Salem High School and Collins Middle School. Encourage your student to participate!

Those 60+ can enjoy free lunches at the Community Life Center at 401 Bridge St. Lunches are served Mon-Fri at 11:30am. Reservations required: oblumbergesalem.com / **978-744-0924**



This Week's Feast: Ambrose of Milan

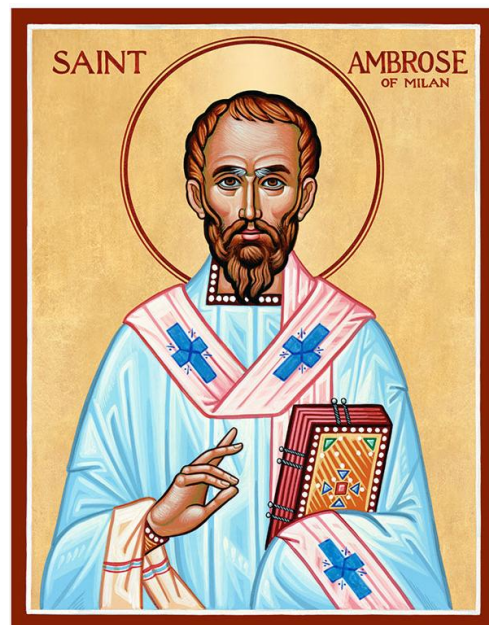
Ambrose was the son of a Roman governor in Gaul, and in 373, he himself became governor in Upper Italy. Though brought up in a Christian family, Ambrose had not been baptized. He became involved in the election of a Bishop of Milan only as mediator between the battling factions of Arians and Nicene Christians. The election was important, because the victorious party would control the powerful see of Milan.

Ambrose exhorted the nearly riotous mob to keep the peace and to obey the law. Suddenly both sides raised the cry, "Ambrose shall be our bishop!" He protested, but the people persisted. Hastily baptized, he was ordained as a bishop on December 7, 373.

Ambrose rapidly won renown as a defender of orthodoxy against Arianism and as a statesman of the church. He was also a skillful hymnodist. He introduced antiphonal chanting to enrich the liturgy and wrote straightforward, practical discourses to educate his people in such matters of doctrine as Baptism, the Trinity, the Eucharist, and the Person of Christ. His persuasive preaching was an important factor in the conversion of Augustine of Hippo.

Ambrose did not fear to rebuke emperors, including the hot-headed Theodosius, whom he forced to do public penance for the slaughter of several thousand citizens of Thessalonica. He also preached passionate sermons in defense of the poor and the needy. In a homily on Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings 21) he declares: "The story of Naboth is an old one, but it is repeated every day. Who among the rich does not daily covet the goods of others? Who among the wealthy does not make every effort to drive the poor person out from his little plot and turn the needy out from the boundaries of his ancestral fields? Who is satisfied with what is his? What rich person's thoughts are not preoccupied with his neighbor's possessions? It is not one Ahab who was born, therefore, but—what is worse—Ahab is born every day, and never does he die as far as this world is concerned. For each one who dies there are many others who rise up; there are more who steal property than who lose it . . . How far, O rich, will you extend your mad greed?"

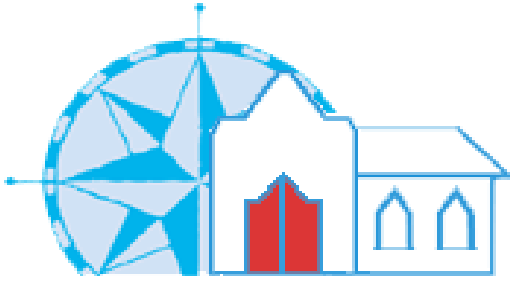
A meditation attributed to him includes these words:
"Lord Jesus Christ, you are for me medicine when I am sick; you are my strength when I need help; you are life itself when I fear death; you are the way when I long for heaven; you are light when all is dark; you are my food when I need nourishment." Among hymns attributed to Ambrose are "The eternal gifts of Christ the King" (The Hymnal 1982, #233; #234), "O Splendor of God's glory bright" (#5), and a series of hymns for the daily office.
From Lesser Feasts and Fasts, Church Publishing



Greek Icon of Saint Ambrose of Milan

Date / Origin: 19th–20th century; author unknown.

Grace Episcopal Church



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The Mission of Grace Church is to unconditionally invite all people to join us in building a faithful Episcopal congregation that goes out into the community and through prayer, presence, and partnering improves the quality of life by bringing everyone closer to God.

— Grace Episcopal Church —

A parish in the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

The Most Reverend Sean Rowe

The Right Reverend Julia Whitworth

The Reverend Sarah A. Conner

The Reverend E. Clifford Cutler

The Reverend Manny Faria

Mark N. Peterson

Tom and Karen Tucker

Presiding Bishop

Bishop Diocesan

Interim Priest

Assisting Clergy

Assisting Clergy

Music Director

Property Stewards

— Vestry —

Ryan Patten

Lisa Duffy

Joanna Troy

Katie Scott

Javy Awan, Marianne Cannon, Kai Freyleue,

Joanne Moar, Susan Tweed, Holly Willis

Senior Warden

Junior Warden

Clerk

Treasurer

Members of Vestry