

Zoom Meeting ID: 326 920 7504

Call-in option: 1) Dial 646-568-7788 or 929-205-6099, 2) Enter 326 920 7504 # and 3) Press # for a participant's ID



Hymn

His light in us

Composer: Kim Andre Arnesen

The Invitatory and Psalter

Officiant Show us your mercy, O Lord:

Celebrants **And grant your salvation.**

Officiant Come and save us, O Lord God of hosts.

Celebrants **Come and save us, O Lord God of hosts.**

Officiant Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved:

Celebrants **O Lord God of hosts.**

All **Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:**

Come and save us, O Lord God of hosts.

Officiant The mercy of the Lord is everlasting: Come let us adore him.

Venite Psalm 95:1-7

All **Come, let us sing to the Lord; ***

let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving *

and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, *

and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the caverns of the earth, *

and the heights of the hills are his also.

The sea is his, for he made it, *

and his hands have molded the dry land.

Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, *

and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. *

Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

Officiant The mercy of the Lord is everlasting: Come let us adore him.

The Lesson

Reader A Lesson from *Matthew 11:2-11*

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."

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Celebrants **Thanks be to God.**

The Song of Mary (Luke 1:46-55) *Magnificat*

All **My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

Hymn #68

Rejoice! Rejoice, believers

Words: Laurentius Laurenti
Music: *Llangloffan*

Reflection

Nancy Meyer

Two years ago, I enhanced my study of the Bible by watching videos and listening to podcasts from a non-profit organization called *The Bible Project*. I learned that the Bible is an epic narrative of God's interaction with humanity, whom God chose as His partners to oversee His amazing world. Throughout history, God made it clear to the people there was a path of life they should follow. They were to follow a path of obedience; faith in Him; and love for others. God wanted them to follow that path. When they disobeyed him, God was portrayed as a wounded parent. God was sorrowful, like a parent who loved their child, who has gone astray. Through the prophets He expressed His sorrow and disappointment.

And God expressed His promise to save them. Prophets in the Old Testament foretold how Jesus would come and restore humanity's relationship with God. The Bible tells a unified story that leads to Jesus. Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophets.

John the Baptist, throughout his life, fulfilled his God-given purpose as a great prophet. He proclaimed the upcoming judgement of God, in flaming fire, destroying those who were not prepared. He urged people to repent and be baptized. And though he proclaims the kingdom, he does not belong to it. Jesus said, whatever one might have thought of John, no one would call him "a reed" or accuse him of loving the finer things. He was indeed a prophet, Jesus affirms, but much more. He was the messenger who came, in accordance with scripture, to prepare the way for the Messiah, who was Jesus. Still, Jesus says that "the least in the kingdom of heaven" is greater than John. Sadly, John will not be alive to see how Jesus' ministry will be carried out. Every child of God will know a glory surpassing that of John. John was the last of the Biblical prophets.

John had been put in prison by King Herod. As he sat in prison, he began to have doubts about whether Jesus was really the Messiah. Perhaps John envisioned a Messiah to be different from what Jesus was. Maybe he expected a transcendent figure to appear soon to exercise God's final judgment. Perhaps he did not understand Jesus' approach. And if Jesus was the Messiah, then why was John in prison when he could have been preaching to the crowds, preparing people's hearts for Jesus' teachings? Jesus answered John's doubts by pointing to His acts of healing the blind, lame and deaf; curing lepers; raising the dead and preaching the good news to the poor. With so much evidence, Jesus' identity was obvious. Jesus is re-assuring John that His deeds show He is the Messiah.



John had moments of uncertainty and doubt. As we walk along our spiritual journey, we too have times when we face fear, doubts, and uncertainties. I am currently experiencing a difficult time, as my oldest brother is undergoing chemotherapy treatments for liver cancer. The success of these treatments and his prognosis are unknown. However, I find hope in the messages of healing and restoration conveyed in today's readings. About how: the wilderness and dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; waters shall break forth in the wilderness; eyes of the blind shall be opened; ears of the deaf unstopped; lame shall leap like a deer; tongue of the speechless will sing for joy; the Lord sets the prisoners free; and the eyes of the blind will be opened.

Through prayer and scripture studies, I learned of Jesus' love and compassion. I have accepted Him as my Lord and Savior. I am confident that whatever may happen in the future, Jesus will be with me. And that gives me peace and strength. The darkness of any fear dissipates by the light of my faith and hope in Jesus.

I shall revive at thy light; my vital spirits will confess thy presence. Grief and anxiety will vanish before thee, and immortal joys surround my soul. (Elizabeth Rowe)

The Apostles' Creed

All 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.

The Prayers

Officiant The Lord be with you.
Celebrants **And also with you.**
Officiant Let us pray, singing

**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 Supplication *Pray responsively.*

V. For the hungry and the overfed
R. **May we have enough.**

V. For the mourners and the mockers
R. **May we laugh together.**

V. For the victims and the oppressors
R. **May we share power wisely.**

V. For the peacemakers and the warmongers
R. **May clear truth and stern love lead us to harmony.**

V. For the silenced and the propagandists
R. **May we speak our own words in truth.**

V. For the unemployed and the overworked
R. **May our impression on the earth be kind and creative.**

V. For the troubled and the sleek

- R. May we live together as wounded healers.**
 V. For the homeless and the cosseted
R. May our homes be simple, warm and welcoming.
 V. For the vibrant and the dying
R. May we all die to live.

The Collect for Third Sunday of Advent

All **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 Collect for the Bread of Life

Celebrant God of seed and growth and harvest, creator of need, creator of satisfaction; give us, we pray, our daily bread, sufficient and assured for all. Give us also, we pray, the bread of life, and we shall have a care to feed the hungry, and to seek for peace and justice in the world. Help us, then, to remember and to know that you are our life today and very day; you are the food we need, now and for ever. **Amen.**

For those in Pain

Celebrant Jesus, you knew pain, you knew the loneliness, the weakness and the degradation it brings; you knew the agony. Jesus, your suffering is the only hope, the only reconciliation for those who suffer. Be with them as they grapple with the pain s/he suffers now. Be a promise to them that this present suffering will cease; be the hand that they can hold; be present, Savior, for we need you now. **Amen.**

A Collect for Wisdom

Celebrant God, grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference. **Amen.**

For Transformation

Celebrant We pray you, Jesus, take the old water, our busy conscientious lives, and turn them into gospel wine, that everyone may see your life and thirst; for the glory of your holy name. **Amen.**

For the Will of God

Celebrant Jesus our Lord, you have taught us that judgement begins at the house of God; save us from our self-satisfaction, rigidity, and corruption, so that we may stand ready to do your will; for the glory of your holy name. **Amen.**

For the Light of Christ

Celebrant We praise you, God, that the light of Christ shines in our darkness and is never overcome; show us the way we must go to eternal day; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For Unity

Celebrant Creator God, you have made us not in one mold, but in many: so deepen our unity in Christ that we may rejoice in our diversity. Call us together, call us to eat and drink with you. Grant that by your body and your blood we may be drawn to each other and to you. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. **Amen.**

For Peace

Celebrant O God, it is your will to hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the design of your great love shine on the waste of our wraths and sorrows, and give peace to your Church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts. **Amen.**

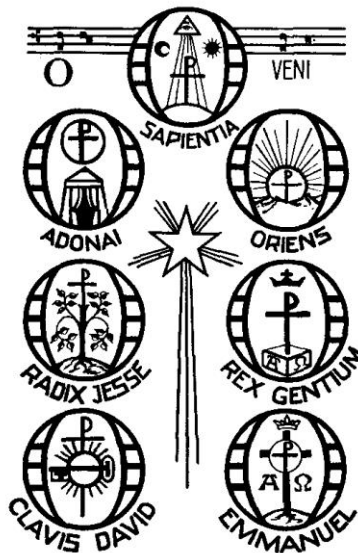
A General Thanksgiving

All **Creator God,**
We praise you for your love in coming to us,
unworthy though we are.
Give us grace to accept the Christ who comes in your name,
and the courage to be Christ for others.
We praise and thank you, Creator God,
for you have not left us alone.
Each year you come to us, Emmanuel,
God with us in a manger.
Each time you come to us
in the broken bread and the cup we share.
In time or out of time you will be revealed
and we shall see you face to face.

Give us courage, God our strength,
to see your Christ in all who suffer,
to be hands to the helpless,
food for the hungry,
and rescue for the oppressed.
Through Christ, Amen.

Officiant Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia!
Celebrants **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!**

Officiant May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility,
sanctify us with the light of his blessing and set us free from all sin. **Amen.**
May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await,
make us steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. **Amen.**
May all of us, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer,
at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life. **Amen.**



Saint Agnes Church
65 Union Ave, Little Falls, NJ 07424
Serving people of Little Falls and surrounding communities since 1896,
Saint Agnes Church is a part of the Episcopal/Anglican branch
of the Jesus Movement in the Diocese of Newark, striving to be a contemplative community.