



St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

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The First Sunday of Advent

November 29, 2020

Prelude

Sleepers Wake! A Voice Is Calling

J. S. Bach

Celebrant: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins;

People: His mercy endures for ever. Amen.

The Celebrant then continues

There is one Body and one Spirit;

People: **There is one hope in God's call to us;**

Celebrant: One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;

People: **One God and Father of all.**

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Let us pray.

The Collect of the Day

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Word of God

The First Lesson Isaiah 64:1-9

Lector A reading from the Book of Isaiah.

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence--
as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil--
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.
We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.
Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

Lector The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18 (*read responsively by whole verse*)

¹ Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

² **In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, ***
stir up your strength and come to help us.

³ Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

- 4 O LORD God of hosts, ***
how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?
- ⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- 6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, ***
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- ⁷Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 16 Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, ***
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.
- ¹⁷And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.
- 18 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; ***
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

The Epistle 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Lector A reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind-- just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you-- so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lector The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God**

Sequence

The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns

Jones

The Holy Gospel Mark 13:24-37

Then, all standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads the Gospel, first saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "In those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

After the Gospel, the Reader says

The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The Sermon

Anthem

Descend, O Spirit

from *Geistliche Lieder*

Presentation and Examination of the Candidate

The Celebrant says:

The Candidate for Holy Baptism will now be presented.

Infants and Younger Children

Then the candidates unable to answer for themselves are presented individually by their Parents and Godparents, as follows

Parents and Godparents: **I present Boone to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.**

When all have been presented the Celebrant asks the parents and godparents

Will you be responsible for seeing that the child you present is brought up in the Christian faith and life?

Parents and Godparents: **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant: Will you by your prayers and witness help this child to grow into the full stature of Christ?

Parents and Godparents: **I will, with God's help.**

Then the Celebrant asks the following questions of the candidates who can speak for themselves, and of the parents and godparents who speak on behalf of the infants and younger children

Question: Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

Answer: **I renounce them.**

Question: Do you renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

Answer: **I renounce them.**

Question: Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?

Answer: **I renounce them.**

Question: Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Savior?

Answer: **I do.**

Question: Do you put your whole trust in his grace and love?

Answer: **I do.**

Question: Do you promise to follow and obey him as your Lord?

Answer: **I do.**

Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support this person in her life in Christ?

People: **We will.**

The Celebrant then says these or similar words

Let us join with *those who are committing themselves* to Christ and renew our own baptismal covenant.

The Baptismal Covenant

Celebrant: Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Celebrant: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People: **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.

Celebrant: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People: **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.**

Celebrant: Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers ?

People: **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant: Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People: **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant: Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

People: **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant: Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself ?

People: **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant: Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

People: **I will, with God's help.**

Prayers for the Candidate

The Celebrant then says to the congregation

Let us now pray for this person who is to receive the Sacrament of new birth.

A Person appointed leads the following petitions

Leader: Deliver him, O Lord, from the way of sin and death.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Open his heart to your grace and truth.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Fill him with your holy and life-giving Spirit.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Keep him in the faith and communion of your holy Church.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Teach him to love others in the power of the Spirit.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Send him into the world in witness to your love.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Bring him to the fullness of your peace and glory.

People: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

The Celebrant says

Grant, O Lord, that all who are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ your Son may live in the power of his resurrection and look for him to come again in glory; who lives and reigns now and for ever. **Amen.**

Thanksgiving over the Water

The Celebrant blesses the water, first saying

The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Celebrant: We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water. Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life. We thank you, Father, for the water of Baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit. Therefore in joyful obedience to your Son, we bring into his fellowship those who come to him in faith, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Now sanctify this water, we pray you, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that those who here are cleansed from sin and born again may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Baptism

The candidate is presented by name to the Celebrant, who then immerses, or pours water upon, the candidate, saying

Boone, I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Priest, at a place in full sight of the congregation, prays over him, saying

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon this your servant the forgiveness of sin, and have raised him to the new life of grace. Sustain him, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give him an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. **Amen.**

Then the Priest marks the sign of the cross on the forehead using Chrism and saying

Boone, you are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own for ever. **Amen.**

When all have been baptized, the Celebrant says

Let us welcome the newly baptized.

Celebrant and People: **We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood.**

The Peace

The Celebrant says to the people

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

Then the Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord, while keeping physical distance.

If there is no celebration of the Eucharist, the service continues with the Lord's Prayer.

**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 celebrant then says

All praise and thanks to you, most merciful Father, for adopting us as your own children, for incorporating us into your holy Church, and for making us worthy to share in the inheritance of the saints in light; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

For the Sick

p. 459

Heavenly Father, giver of life and health: Comfort and relieve your sick servants **Ashley Burnett, Jeanine Wilson, Al Cowand, Randy Tyler, Ben Procter, Joan Leggett, Kay Barnacascel, Becky Godwin, John Tolbert, Coley McCally, Karen Gudiksen, Bobbie and Rendol Cobb, Libby Smith, Marian Watts, Lena Evans, Charles Taylor Spruill, Larry Watson, Julia Credle, Joey Ezelle, Racheal Coward, Peggy Parker, Sylvia Dawson, David Dunn, Elsie Benson, Riley Raines, Andy Walker, The Rev. Jim Horton, Will Copeland, Jim Davis, Mary Gillam, Rita Hoggard, those with COVID-19, and others known to us, and give your power of healing to those who minister to their needs, that they may be strengthened in their weakness and have confidence in your loving care; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.****

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom every family in heaven and earth is named, grant you to be strengthened with might by his Holy Spirit, that, Christ dwelling in your hearts by faith, you may be filled with all the fullness of God. **Amen.**

Postlude

Lo, He Comes With Clouds Descending

Arne

MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

Officiant: The Rev. Bonnie Smith

Organist: Tom Parker

Altar: Lisa Rascoe, Kristy Copeland, Nancy Davis

Lector: Jaquelin Perry

Soloist: Marti Tyler

Ushers: Bob Capehart, Bill Pittman

Hostesses: Ann Cowper, Marti Tyler, Lisa Rascoe

Money Counters: Dean Fisk, Free Perry

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you for observing proper precautions for any gatherings during COVID-19: wear a mask, wash your hands, and wait 6 feet apart between households.

Under COVID-19 guidelines, the following changes must be made to our worship:

- Offering plates will not be passed. Please deposit your offering in the designated basket as you arrive or exit. Or you may mail your offering to St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, PO Box 400, Windsor, NC 27983.
- Congregational and choral singing are not permitted. A soloist is allowed, while physical distancing and wearing a face covering.
- Nursery care and children's Sunday School cannot be offered. A new activity sheet and coloring page will be available each Sunday.
- No receptions or meals may be offered before or after worship.
- Please limit use of church restrooms.

Please take your printed bulletin home or drop it in the designated recycling container.

Small water bottles are available for your use.

Weather permitting, we will continue with outdoor worship next Sunday at 11:00 a.m., with video on Facebook.

We welcome into the household of God: Samuel Boone Perry, son of Mollie and Free Perry, brother of Freeman Perry, and grandson of Jaquelin and Norman Perry.

Thank you to everyone who has returned your pledge card. Please consider prayerfully what God is calling you to give to St. Thomas' Church in 2021 and return your pledge card by tomorrow, November 30.

The vestry will hold a special meeting over Zoom tomorrow at 5:00 p.m.

Written parish ministry reports for the annual meeting are due to the priest by noon this Wednesday, December 2.

You are invited to join the diocesan-wide "Journey through East Carolina" today through February 7, 2021. Details are available at <https://www.ecdio.org/journey.html> . Sign up to join the St. Thomas' group!

Bishop Skirving's Visitation to St. Thomas' Church is scheduled for Sunday, January 24, 2021. If you are interested in being confirmed as a member of St. Thomas' Church, please let The Rev. Bonnie Smith know as soon as possible so that instruction can be planned.

New *Forward Day by Day* devotional booklets are available.

Reminder: The Opportunity Shoppe is open Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and the first three Saturdays of the month from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Masks are required. Donations are accepted on Mondays between 10 and 2 or by appointment. Leave a message at 252-794-5595.