

ADVENT

Sunday, December 6, 2020

Holy Communion

Second Sunday of Advent

Week Two: Peace

Order of Service

Gathering Song..... “Sweet, Sweet Spirit” (Hymnal, #334)

There’s a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place, and I know that it’s the spirit of the Lord; There are sweet expressions on each face, and I know they feel the presence of the Lord. Sweet holy Spirit, sweet heavenly Dove, stay right here with us filling us with your love; and for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise; without a doubt we’ll know that we have been revived when we shall leave this place.

Greeting/Call to Worship..... **Cynthia**

Leader: We come to worship amidst these challenging days..

Sandy: We come seeking peace.

Leader: We seek serenity within us.

Sandy: We seek harmony among our neighbors.

Leader: We seek goodness throughout the world.

Sandy: We seek the presence of Shalom! We have come to sing a song of Advent to the one who graces us with Peace!

Hymn of Praise..... “O How I Love Jesus”

(sing along with Piano Accompaniment)

1 There is a name I love to hear,
I love to sing its worth;
it sounds like music in my ear,
the sweetest name on earth.

Refrain:

O how I love Jesus,
O how I love Jesus,
O how I love Jesus,
because he first loved me!

2 It tells me of a Savior's love,
who died to set me free;
it tells me of his precious blood,
the sinner's perfect plea. **[Refrain]**

3 It tells of one whose loving heart
can feel my deepest woe;
who in each sorrow bears a part
that none can bear below. **[Refrain]**

It isn't enough to talk about **peace**. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it. —*Eleanor Roosevelt*

Lighting of the Candle — Candle of Peace..... Sister Sandy

Prayer of Confession and Assurance (*Unison*)

Forgive us, Lord, for the times we refuse to listen to those who announce your presence. Forgive us when we ignore the cries that come from the wilderness. Allow us to understand that, like John the Baptist, we too are unworthy before the Lord of All. Help us live into our baptisms. Remind us of the beginning of the Good News of Jesus Christ, and empower us to be the continuation of that Good News.

But do not ignore this one fact, beloved. With the Lord, one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about His promise, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.

The Invocation

Song of Meditation — “Now Behold the Lamb” (*song by Kirk Franklin & the Family*)

The Prayer of Illumination (*Unison*)

Draw us close, Holy Spirit, as the scriptures are read, and the Word is proclaimed. Let the word of faith be on our lips and in our hearts, and let all other words slip away. May there be one voice we hear today – the voice of truth and grace. **Amen!**

Scripture Reading #1

(*Isaiah 40:1–11, Common English Bible*)

40 Comfort, comfort my people! says your God. ² Speak compassionately to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her compulsory service has ended, that her penalty has been paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins!

³ A voice is crying out: “Clear the LORD's way in the desert! Make a level highway in the wilderness for our God! ⁴ Every valley will be raised up, and every mountain and hill will be flattened. Uneven ground will become level, and rough terrain a valley plain. ⁵ The LORD's glory will appear, and all humanity will see it together; the LORD's mouth has commanded it.”

⁶ A voice was saying: “Call out!” And another said, “What should I call out?” All flesh is grass; all its loyalty is like the flowers of the field. ⁷ The grass dries up and the flower withers when the LORD's breath blows on it. Surely the people are grass. ⁸ The grass dries up; the flower withers, but our God's word will exist forever.

⁹ Go up on a high mountain, messenger Zion! Raise your voice and shout, messenger Jerusalem! Raise it; don't be afraid; say to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God!” ¹⁰ Here is the LORD God, coming with strength, with a triumphant arm, bringing his reward with him and his payment before him. ¹¹ Like a shepherd, God will tend the flock; he will gather lambs in his arms and lift them onto his lap. He will gently guide the nursing ewes.

Scripture Reading #2

(Philippians 4:2–9, Common English Bible)

²I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to come to an agreement in the Lord. ³Yes, and I’m also asking you, loyal friend, to help these women who have struggled together with me in the ministry of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my coworkers whose names are in the scroll of life.

⁴Be glad in the Lord always! Again I say, be glad! ⁵Let your gentleness show in your treatment of all people. The Lord is near. ⁶Don’t be anxious about anything; rather, bring up all of your requests to God in your prayers and petitions, along with giving thanks. ⁷Then the peace of God that exceeds all understanding will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus.

⁸From now on, brothers and sisters, if anything is excellent and if anything is admirable, focus your thoughts on these things: all that is true, all that is holy, all that is just, all that is pure, all that is lovely, and all that is worthy of praise. ⁹Practice these things: whatever you learned, received, heard, or saw in us. The God of peace will be with you.

Scripture Reading #3

(Matthew 1:18–25, Common English Bible)

Birth of Jesus

¹⁸This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn’t want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly. ²⁰As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” ²²Now all of this took place so that what the Lord had spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled:

²³*Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son,
And they will call him, Emmanuel.*

(Emmanuel means “God with us.”)

²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did just as an angel from God commanded and took Mary as his wife. ²⁵But he didn’t have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. Joseph called him Jesus.

Doxology – “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here be low; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. **Amen.**

The Affirmation of Faith — “The Apostles’ Creed”

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth:

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried:

the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick 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 Gloria Patri – “Glory Be to the Father”

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now
and ever shall be, world without end. **Amen.**

Children / Youth Moment**Sister Jaime**

Hymn of Preparation — “I’ve Got Peace Like A River” (*sing along with piano accompaniment*)

I've got peace like a river
I've got peace like a river
I've got peace like a river in my soul
I've got peace like a river
I've got peace like a river
I've got peace like a river in my soul

I've got joy like a fountain
I've got joy like a fountain
I've got joy like a fountain in my soul
I've got joy like a fountain
I've got joy like a fountain
I've got joy like a fountain in my soul

I've got love like an ocean
I've got love like an ocean
I've got love like an ocean in my soul
I've got love like an ocean
I've got love like an ocean
I've got love like an ocean in my soul

I've got peace like a river
I've got peace like a river
I've got peace like a river in my soul
I've got peace like a river
I've got peace like a river
I've got peace like a river in my soul

Inspirational Message **Rev. Eugene W. Matthews**

“Finding Peace in Troubled Times”

Praise and Prayer Concerns

Invitation / Altar Call

Invitation Selection — “Peace Be Still” (*song by James Cleveland*)

Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving for Advent

The pastor stands behind the Lord's table.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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.
You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.
When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.
You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God,
and spoke to us through your prophets, who looked for that day
when justice shall roll down like waters
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream,
when nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war anymore.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ,
whom you sent in the fullness of time to be a light to the nations.
You scatter the proud in the imagination of their hearts
and have mercy on those who fear you from generation to generation.
You put down the mighty from their thrones and exalt those of low degree.
You fill the hungry with good things, and the rich you send empty away.
Your own Son came among us as a servant,
to be Emmanuel, your presence with us.

He humbled himself in obedience to your will
and freely accepted death on a cross.
By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection
you gave birth to your Church,
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,
gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:
“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:
“Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and for ever.

Amen.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

And now, with the confidence of children of God, let us pray:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

BREAKING THE BREAD

The pastor breaks the bread in silence, or while saying:

Because there is one loaf,
we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.
The bread which we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.

The pastor lifts the cup in silence, or while saying:

The cup over which we give thanks is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

The bread and wine are given to the people, with these or other words being exchanged:

The body of Christ, given for you. Amen.

The blood of Christ, given for you. Amen.

The congregation sings hymns while the bread and cup are given.

When all have received, the Lord's table is put in order.

The following prayer is then offered by the pastor or by all:

**Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery
in which you have given yourself to us.**

Grant that we may go into the world

in the strength of your Spirit,

to give ourselves for others,

in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Announcements

Benediction

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Go forth in peace.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,

and the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit

be with you all. **Amen.**



Happy Birthday and Anniversary December Members



Announcements

Pray Daily at Noon

Please remember to pray daily at NOON. Some areas to include in your prayer, can include the pandemic, racial healing, government leaders, educational challenges, and most importantly for our sick and shut-ins and each other.



Wednesdays (7:15 p.m.) — Wednesday Night Experience. Call-in Information: **712-770-4010 (Access code: 331960)**

Sunday, December 20th (10:00 a.m.) — Annual Christmas Service. Join us for a virtual play — “**Light Before Christmas**”

LARS 2020 Holiday Program!



Prayerfully, members of St. Mark’s will partner with LARS (Laurel Advocacy & Referral Services, Inc.) this holiday season to support local families in need. It is our opportunity to be a blessing to others. Because of pandemic job layoffs, the need for assistance has increased. **To reduce the cost, divide the children's wish lists among your friends and family.** Adopt-a-Family Christmas wish lists will be sent out to donors who **fill out the Holiday Program Donor Interest Form at the LARS website:** <https://www.laureladvocacy.org/volunteer-holiday.html>. When you complete the interest form, you will request the family with the number of children you can sponsor (Example: 1 family that has 2 children). Please ensure that ALL your labeled packages/gifts are delivered to LARS starting **Monday, November 30th by 5:00 p.m.** The last day to deliver is **Friday, December 11th by 5:00 p.m.**

Please MARK EACH PACKAGE CLEARLY with the recipient family’s assigned number (written in the top right corner of the wish list). PLEASE INCLUDE the initials, age, and gender of the intended recipient for each individual package. If possible, please group the items for each individual or for each family into one LARGE labeled bag so that nothing gets lost! *If any of your packages include gift cards, please put them in a separate envelope labeled with the family number and recipient’s initials. When making your delivery, please ensure that any gift cards are handed to a LARS staff member to be locked up.

Karina Valenzuela, Coordinator (301.776.0442, ext. 103). LARS is located at 311 Laurel Avenue, Laurel, MD 20707 just a few blocks south of Main St. off Route 1. Donations can be dropped off Monday through Friday, generally from 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. (9:00 a.m.–7:30 p.m. on Mondays).

Note from Finance: First, let us give a big thank you to all that have been giving. This is a reminder that there are several ways to get your offering to the church:

1. You can drop it off at the church, place in the mailbox (Cynthia and David Burley check it regularly) **(This will save you postage)**
2. You can mail it to the church ([601 Eighth Street, Laurel, MD 20707](#))
3. You can use on-line giving (Give–St. Marks — <https://www.shelbygiving.com/app/giving/stmarkslmd>)
4. Reach out to member of finance, they will try to accommodate you.

Again, thank you. Just remember, even during the pandemic, the church building still has obligations that need to be met.

Holiday Food Drive for LARS

LARS will provide holiday meal baskets to over 200 families and seniors in need this holiday season. Please help keep the food pantry full by donating any unwanted food in your own pantry or by filling up a basket for LARS next time you do your grocery shopping. Grocery gift cards can also be donated to LARS families.

Helpful Holiday Items:

Canned vegetables
Canned yams
Cornbread mix
Cranberry sauce

Fresh or canned fruit
Frozen hams/turkeys
Gravy
Instant potatoes

Oil/ Cooking spray
Pie filling/crust
Rice
Stuffing

Gift cards to your local grocery stores



Please remember to check expiration dates!

Donations can also be dropped off at LARS
Mon, Wed, Fri 9-2pm & Monday 5-7:30pm

Laurel Advocacy & Referral Services, Inc.
311 Laurel Avenue
Laurel, MD 20707
301-776-0442
www.laureladvocacy.org

For information on volunteering at LARS, contact Jazmin Haley-Warren
301-776-0442 ext. 1032 or jwarren@laureladvocacy.org
For information about LARS' Holiday Program, contact Karina Valenzuela
301-776-0442 ext. 1030 or kvalenzuela@laureladvocacy.org

**Laurel Advocacy & Referral Services, Inc.
2020 Holiday Program**

What is LARS' Holiday Program?

LARS' Holiday Program is an opportunity for individuals, families, community groups, congregations, and businesses to assist Laurel residents who are in need of support during the upcoming holiday season.

About the Holiday Program:

LARS' Holiday Program has three components:

Adopt –A- Family Program: Each family participating in the Adopt-A-Family program will complete a wish list for each child in the home. This wish list will include the child's interests, wants, and needs. Donors can adopt a particular number of children and provide gifts for those children based on the information included on their wish list. We do allow parents to include personal and household needs, but it is up to the donor to decide whether or not they would like to provide anything from that list. The gifts are delivered by the donor to LARS and distributed to the adopted families on our December distribution day.

Giving Week: In order to extend support to as many families as possible, those who are not able to participate in the Adopt-A-Family program are encouraged to visit LARS during Giving Week to receive gifts for their children. In order to make Giving Week happen, we are looking for individuals to provide loose/unwrapped gifts and gift cards. These gifts can include (but are not limited to) books, games, or toys for children birth to 18 years of age. This enables case managers to provide children with gifts suitable for their age/interest.

Holiday Food Help: In November and December, LARS will be providing holiday food to the families participating in LARS' Adopt-A-Family program and to seniors who request holiday food assistance. On the Monday and Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving and during Giving Week, LARS will extend holiday food assistance to as many additional individuals and families in the Laurel community as supplies will allow. Donations of food and grocery store gift cards allow us to provide holiday food to more and more families each year.



2019 Program Impact:

This past holiday season, LARS was able to provide gifts to about 402 Children through the Adopt-A-Family program and through loose gifts and gift cards donated by generous members of the Laurel community and beyond. Over 194 families and seniors were able to cook a holiday meal, thanks to donations of turkeys, hams, chickens, fresh produce, and other essentials to LARS' food pantry.

Ways to participate:

1. Support a family through the Adopt-A-Family program
2. Donate loose gifts & gift cards to be distributed during Giving Week
3. Donate holiday food or gift cards to local grocery stores
4. Volunteer during the holiday season

Partner with LARS this holiday season!

In the coming months, Laurel families will be requesting holiday assistance from LARS. Please, consider how you can partner with LARS this holiday season. To sign up or request more information, visit our website and complete a quick survey: <https://www.laureladvocacy.org/volunteer-holiday.html>

Contact:

Karina Valenzuela, Bilingual Case Manager
Phone: (301) 776-0442 Ext. 1030
Fax: 301-604-7076
E-mail: kvalenzuela@laureladvocacy.org

VOICES OF LAUREL

A JOURNALISTIC COLLECTIVE FOR LAUREL, MARYLAND

Info for Contributors

The Laurel History Boys are preparing to produce a quarterly newspaper all about Laurel. Each of the History Boys will be contributing content but what makes this paper different are contributions from people who have a story to tell, photos or artifacts to share, or anything else that applies to Laurel. The paper is called *Voices of Laurel* to reflect everyone's voice, not just the Laurel History Boys. We hope to have enough different contributors to reflect the diversity of the area. If you know anyone who would want to become a contributor, please have them contact us.

Your subject matter: What you contribute is up to you, but there must be some connection to Laurel. We would prefer something of an historical nature but that's not required. Not everyone wants to write, so photos, collections, whatever, are also fine.

Publication timeline:

ISSUE	ARTICLES DUE
Winter	Dec. 15
Spring	Mar. 15
Summer	Jun. 15
Fall	Sep. 15

Format & distribution: The paper, which is free, will be electronically distributed as a PDF file. That allows us to include live links to anything we feel is relevant, including video. A link to the paper will be on our [Facebook page](#) and [website](#), and we encourage all contributors to post it as well. The initial reach alone will be in the thousands.

Submitting articles: Articles should be created in Microsoft Word or simply typed into the body of an email and sent to Kevin via email (theleonardgroup7@gmail.com). Do not feel constrained for space. As an online paper that's not an issue. We will edit the contributions for grammar only. We want these to be in your voice. If we have questions about content, we will talk to you before making any changes.

Also, please send us a head shot of yourself to use next your articles.

Photos: Feel free to include photos or images within your article to help us with placement, but please also attach the images separately as jpegs. It makes laying out the paper much easier. Send credits along with your photos. If you own them, say so. If not, tell us who does. You cannot use a photo from the Internet if you don't know who owns it. If you need personal photos or images scanned, let us know. We will help with that.

Commitment: Think about how often you'd like to contribute. Once a year, every issue, or in between. We're not trying to make this too corporate, but we do need a sense of how often you will contribute so we can map out issues in advance. If you want to contribute to every issue, we can talk about a column with a name. Let us know before the December 15th Winter issue deadline. We're very flexible.

PUBLISHED BY THE LAUREL HISTORY BOYS, INC. | LAURELHISTORY.COM





*“Proclaiming Christ to the generations...
Equipping disciples to transform the world”*

Special Prayers / Sick and Shut-In List: If you hear of anyone that is in need of special prayer or is taken to the hospital, please contact: Rev. Eugene Matthews (443.257.2730 (cell), 410.379.0600 (home), reveugene@comcast.net)

Brian Bailey, Rayvon Roy, Joyce Gibson, Tony Tingle, Mitchell Talley, LaKisha Thomas, James (Stoney) Carroll, Marva Thomas, Nena Hughes, Deysha Gibson, Gloria Thomas, Sharon Thomas, Rev. George F. DeFord, Wanda Dumas, Sherman / Erica Roy, Janeen Thomas, Eunice Harding (Gemma's Mother), Tyrone / Pat Mundell, Samuel / James Briggs (Cynthia Burley's brothers), Charles Burley, Joan Moore, Larry Powell, Veronica Miller, Jeanette Reeves, Ernestine Gibson, Mildred Awkward, Grace Elaine Catchings, James Matthews, Birdie Walker, Paul Browder, Laura Dotson, Phillip Reese, Lamar Payne, Kevin Miller, Nancy Daniels, Eunice Parker, Hannah Polk, Delores Tyler

Eunice Dumas

1909 Sheffield Court
Severn, MD 21144
410.551.2435

Umbrenda Fisher

9160 Charlton Place
Douglasville, GA 39135

Ruth Miller

1206 Peachwood Lane
Bowie, MD 20716
240.245.4560

Mrs. Edlin Chambers

14904 4th Street
Laurel, MD
347.423.2764

Diane Cobb

410.802.1427