




***This Sunday at St. Luke's***  
**December 21, 2025**

**8:15 a.m. Holy Communion (said service)**

**10:15 a.m. Holy Communion with organ and hymns**

**Steven Cagle, organist**

## **The Fourth Sunday in Advent**



The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious  
about anything, but in everything  
by prayer and supplication with  
thanksgiving let your requests be  
made known to God.

**PHILIPPIANS 4:5-6 (ESV)**

[truthforlife.org](http://truthforlife.org)

### **The Nearness of the Lord**

The words of this Sunday's Epistle -- "Never forget the nearness of your Lord" -- provide the theme for this Sunday. The emphasis is on the Divine presence *here and now*.

The Collect is addressed to God the Father, and we ask Him to give us power to "run the race that is set before us", in spite of the hindrances of our sins.

Note that "succour" means "come to our aide"; "sorely" means "seriously hindered". For "running the race that is set before us" we need God's help. Thankfully,

that help is promised and available! Seek it and you will find it.

In this Sunday's Gospel, we stand with John the Baptist as he points forward to Jesus, the true Messiah and Lord of all. Again, the stress is on the nearness of the Lord, who often goes unrecognized. "Somewhere among you stands a man you do not know." But this need not happen. He is anxious to reveal Himself if we open our eyes and hearts. We don't have to walk in darkness.

#### **COLLECT FOR ADVENT 4**

O LORD, raise up, we pray thee, thy power, and come among us, and with great might succour us; that wheras through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through the satisfaction of thy Son our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

#### **COLLECT FOR THE SEASON**

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy 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 quick and the dead, we may rise to life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. *Amen.*

#### **THE EPISTLE – Philippians 4:4-7 (J.B. Phillips)**

*Be joyful, be at peace*

<sup>4-5</sup> Delight yourselves in God [rejoice] yes, find your joy in him at all times. Have a reputation for gentleness, and never forget the nearness of your Lord.

<sup>6-7</sup> Don't worry over anything whatever; tell God every detail of your needs in earnest and thankful prayer, and the peace of God which transcends human understanding, will keep constant guard over your hearts and minds as they rest in Christ Jesus.

NOTE: Here is St. Paul's personal farewell to His friends in the church at Philippi. The 'word "rejoice" suggests how Christians should live in the time between our Lord's two Comings. In Philippi there would no doubt have been celebrations of pagan deities. Christians should be out on the streets celebrating their King and Saviour with the same fervency and zeal, though without the excesses and debauchery so common among the pagans.

#### **THE GOSPEL – St. John 1:19-28 (J.B. Phillips)**

*John the Baptist witnesses to Christ*

<sup>19-20</sup> This then is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He admitted with complete candour, "I am not Christ."

<sup>21</sup> So they asked him, “Who are you then? Are you Elijah?” “No, I am not,” he replied. “Are you the Prophet?” “No,” he replied.

<sup>22</sup> “Well, then,” they asked again, “who are you? We want to give an answer to the people who sent us. What would you call yourself?”

<sup>23</sup> “I am ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Make straight the way of the Lord’ as Isaiah the prophet said.”

<sup>24-25</sup> Now some of the Pharisees had been sent to John, and they questioned him, “What is the reason, then, for your baptising people if you are not Christ and not Elijah and not the Prophet?”

<sup>26-28</sup> To which John returned, “I do baptise—with water. But somewhere among you stands a man you do not know. He comes after me, it is true, but I am not fit to undo his shoes!” (All this happened in the Bethany on the far side of the Jordan where the baptisms of John took place.)

NOTE: [Here is the Fourth Gospel picture of John the Baptist preparing men for the coming of the Lord.](#) (William Sydnor)

## LECTIONARY READING

### OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – Isaiah 40:1-11 (RSV)

*God's people are comforted*

**40** Comfort, comfort my people,  
says your God.

<sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her  
that her warfare<sup>[a]</sup> is ended,  
that her iniquity is pardoned,  
that she has received from the LORD's hand  
double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup> A voice cries:  
“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,  
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup> And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,

and all flesh shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

<sup>6</sup> A voice says, “Cry!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All flesh is grass,

and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.

<sup>7</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades,

when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;

surely the people is grass.

<sup>8</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades;

but the word of our God will stand for ever.

<sup>9</sup> Get you up to a high mountain,

O Zion, herald of good tidings;

lift up your voice with strength,

O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,<sup>[c]</sup>

lift it up, fear not;

say to the cities of Judah,

“Behold your God!”

<sup>10</sup> Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,

and his arm rules for him;

behold, his reward is with him,

and his recompense before him.

<sup>11</sup> He will feed his flock like a shepherd,

he will gather the lambs in his arms,

he will carry them in his bosom,

and gently lead those that are with young.

NOTE: The prophet in this chapter gives us a poem which could bear the title “The Coming of the Lord.” Historically the occasion for it was a vision of the end of the Babylonian exile. We cannot read it without thinking of John the Baptist and the coming of our Lord. (William Sydnor)

## **THIS SUNDAY**

**Preacher: The Rector**



**Tip of the Canterbury Cap** to Priscilla Cashman  
for crafting wreaths from the outside of the church.

### **CURRENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **December 2025**

- **Christmas by Candlelight** – Saturday, Dec. 20 at 6 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 21, at 3 p.m. For tickets call 706-851-7548 or visit St. Luke's website. **The Sunday concert is sold out.**
- **St. Thomas the Apostle** – Monday, Dec. 22, HC Jennus Chapel at noon.
- **Christmas Eve Festival Family Service with Carols** – Dec. 24 at 5 p.m.
- **Christmas Eve Festive Choral Communion (traditional late-night candlelight service)** – Dec. 24 at 10 p.m.
- **Christmas Day, Holy Communion**, Dec. 25, 9 a.m.
- **St. Stephen Deacon & Martyr** – Friday, Dec. 26, HC Jennus Chapel at noon

Poinsettias may be purchased for Christmas for \$15.50.

If paying by check, please note at the bottom of the  
check that it is for poinsettias.





## JOIN THE CHOIR!



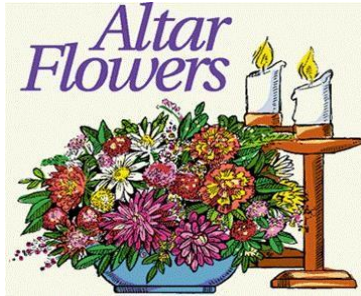
For information, contact, Diana Burden at 678-852-6907 or email [dburden6907@gmail.com](mailto:dburden6907@gmail.com).



The Anglican Relief  
and Development Fund

## OUR MISSION

St. Luke's mission is to grow spiritually in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ and in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and to share our faith, our hands and hearts for the sake of the Gospel, our community and the world.



Call the church office to reserve a date.



**Stewardship**  
*a way of life*

## Financial Pledge for the Year of our Lord 2026

*As stewards of God's gifts and in gratitude for all blessings, I pledge the following amount to the work of Christ through St. Luke's Church for 2026.*

Name

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Address

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Amount

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\_\_\_\_\_ Weekly \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly \_\_\_\_\_ Yearly

(Please tick the appropriate blank)





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