

The Second Sunday In Advent

December 7, 2025



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
1935 The Plaza
Parish Office: 1229 Baker Avenue
Schenectady, New York 12309
518-346-6241; office@st-stephens.church

The Holy Eucharist: Rite II
The Second Sunday in Advent
December 7, 2025
The Entrance Rite

The Prelude

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Ferguson

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Celebrant: A man named John was sent from God. He came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that through him everyone would believe in the light—John 1:6-7.

Let us pray.

As we light the first two candles of the Advent Wreath, we welcome the prophets who shine your light in the world. Help us to get ready to welcome Jesus, once again.

People: **Amen.**

The Processional Hymn

Hymnal #72

The Word of God

The Opening Acclamation

Page #355

Celebrant: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People: **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

The Collect for Purity

Page #355

Celebrant: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

Trisagion

Hymnal S-102

All: **Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**

The Collect of the Day

Page #211

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Let us pray.

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.

People: **Amen.**

The Lessons

The First Lesson

Isaiah 11:1-10

Lector: A reading from the book of Isaiah.

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 in-
quire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Psalm

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

- 1 Give the King your justice, O God, *
and your righteousness to the King's Son;
- 2 That he may rule your people righteously *
and the poor with justice;
- 3 That the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, *
and the little hills bring righteousness.
- 4 He shall defend the needy among the people; *
he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.
- 5 He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure, *
from one generation to another.
- 6 He shall come down like rain upon the mown field, *
like showers that water the earth.

7 In his time shall the righteous flourish; *
 there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

18 Blessed be the Lord GOD, the God of Israel, *
 who alone does wondrous deeds!

19 And blessed be his glorious Name for ever! *
 and may all the earth be filled with his glory.
 Amen. Amen.

The Second Lesson

Romans 15:4-13

Lector: A reading from Paul's letter to the Romans.

Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles,
 and sing praises to your name";

and again he says,

"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people";

and again,

"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
 and let all the peoples praise him";

and again Isaiah says,

"The root of Jesse shall come,
 the one who rises to rule the Gentiles;
 in him the Gentiles shall hope."

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Sequence Hymn

Hymnal #67

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 3:1-12

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ, according to Matthew.

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

Celebrant: 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.”

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon

The Rev. Lisa Busby

The Nicene Creed

Page #358

All: **We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

The Prayers of the People

Celebrant: Friends, may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing. Let us come before the Lord praying, "Blessed are you, Lord God; may the earth be filled with your glory."

Intercessor: Grant your Church, O God of encouragement, to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that we may glorify you with one voice. Make us a people of repentance and bless us with your Holy Spirit and fire.

Silence

Intercessor: Blessed are you, Lord God;

People: **May the earth be filled with your glory.**

Intercessor: Grant this nation, O God of justice, the will to defend the needy and the poor. May we sincerely hope for that day when hurt and destruction are no more.

Silence

Intercessor: Blessed are you, Lord God;

People: **May the earth be filled with your glory.**

Intercessor: Grant your creation, O God of faithfulness, the hope of renewal. May we who are stewards of this earth, also live at peace with all you have created.

Silence

Intercessor: Blessed are you, Lord God;

People: **May the earth be filled with your glory.**

Intercessor: Grant this city, O God of understanding, prosperity. May all the people know and do justice. We ask that you teach us and our leaders the best ways to meet the needs of all our neighbors.

Silence

Intercessor: Blessed are you, Lord God;

People: **May the earth be filled with your glory.**

Intercessor: Grant all the needy, O God of steadfast love, your mercy. Prove yourself to be a God of righteousness and faithfulness. To all their pain and suffering bring your healing and peace. And with your winnowing fork clear from their lives all the forces of oppression.

I invite your prayers of petition and thanksgiving, silently or aloud.

Silence

Intercessor: Blessed are you, Lord God;

People: **May the earth be filled with your glory.**

Intercessor: Grant to those who have died, O God of hope, eternal life in you. Bring the departed into your glorious dwelling where all their hope will be fulfilled in your Christ.

Intercessor: Blessed are you, Lord God;

People: **May the earth be filled with your glory.**

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

The Confession of Sin and Absolution

Page #360

Celebrant: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

All: **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Celebrant: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

People: **Amen.**

The Peace

Page #360

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

The Announcements

The Holy Communion

The Offertory Anthem

Creation Will Be at Peace

Williams/Page

The Doxology

V.3, Hymnal #380

The Great Thanksgiving - Eucharistic Prayer 3

From *Enriching Our Worship*

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 him thanks and praise.**

Celebrant: All thanks and praise are yours at all times and in all places, our true and loving God; through Jesus Christ, your eternal Word, the Wisdom from on high by whom you created all things. You laid the foundations of the world and enclosed the sea when it burst out from the womb; You brought forth all creatures of the earth and gave breath to humankind.

Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

Wondrous are you, Holy One of Blessing, all you create is a sign of hope for our journey; And so as the morning stars sing your praises we join the heavenly beings and all creation as we shout with joy:

Sanctus

Hymnal S-128

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: Glory and honor are yours, Creator of all, your Word has never been silent; you called a people to yourself, as a light to the nations, you delivered them from bondage and led them to a land of promise. Of your grace, you gave Jesus to be human, to

share our life, to proclaim the coming of your holy reign and give himself for us, a fragrant offering. Through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, you have freed us from sin, brought us into your life, reconciled us to you, and restored us to the glory you intend for us.

We thank you that on the night before he died for us Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, gave it to his friends and said:

“Take, eat, this is my Body, broken for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper Jesus took the cup of wine, said the blessing, gave it to his friends and said: “Drink this, all of you: this cup is the new Covenant in my Blood, poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

And so, remembering all that was done for us: the cross, the tomb, the resurrection and ascension, longing for Christ’s coming in glory, and presenting to you these gifts your earth has formed and human hands have made, we acclaim you, O Christ:

All: **Dying, you destroyed our death.
Rising, you restored our life.
Christ Jesus, come in glory!**

Celebrant: Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine that they may be to us the Body and Blood of your Christ. Grant that we, burning with your Spirit’s power, may be a people of hope, justice and love.

Giver of Life, draw us together in the Body of Christ, and in the fullness of time gather us with all your people into the joy of our true eternal home.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, we worship you our God and Creator in voices of unending praise.

All: **Blessed are you now and for ever. AMEN.**

The Lord’s Prayer

Page #364

Celebrant: And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

All: **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today 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 Breaking of the Bread

Page #364

Celebrant: Alleluia, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us:

People: **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

The Fraction Anthem: Agnus Dei

Hymnal S-161

All: **Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
grant us peace.**

The Invitation

Page #364

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God.

by Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts
faith, with thanksgiving.

Celebrant/Minister: The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven. **Amen.**
The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. **Amen.**

The Communion Hymn

Hymnal #54

Post-Communion Prayer

Page #365

Celebrant: Let us pray.

All: **Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Concluding Rite

The Blessing

Page #366

The Recessional Hymn

Hymnal #76

The Dismissal

Page #366

Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Postlude

Episode on "Truro"

Smith

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Our Intercessions

for the week of December 7, 2025

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Church of Bangladesh.

Our Leaders: Donald Trump, President of the United States; Kathy Hochul, Governor of New York; and Gary McCarthy, Mayor of Schenectady.

Our Church Leaders: Sean Rowe, Presiding Bishop; Jeremiah Williamson, Bishop of Albany; and Lisa Busby, Rector.

The Church of England, the Anglican Communion and The Right Reverend and Right Honorable Dame Sarah Mullally, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Those who are ill, recovering from surgery, or in need of strength and healing: Mary Ann Harrington, Marilyn Causey, Vincent Avila, Peter Nelson, Basil Dewdney, Austin Spang, Don Regula, Chris Morin, Helen Perkins, Perrin, Denise Crates, Mtr. Sally Heiligman, Linda, Ann M., Jean V., Bill Frank and Rick Morin.

For all public employees that they may continue their work for justice, peace, and the common good, for those who have lost their jobs, and for all those who live in fear.

For those in the Military: Zachary.

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Announcements

December 7, 2025

Serving Today:	Altar Guild:	Carolyn Morin Basil Dewdney
	Ushers:	Marilyn Humphrey Ron Stefanski
	Eucharistic Minister:	Basil Dewdney
	Acolyte:	George Woodzell
	Lector:	George Woodzell
	Intercessor:	Stan Jakubowski
	Counter:	Richey Woodzell
	Coffee Hour:	Linda & Belachew Emaelaf

Today!: Stuffed Christmas Stockings for Things of My Very Own are due today, as they will be delivered this coming week. Please leave filled stockings in one of the boxes at the back of the church, with a labeled index card attached to the stocking. If you have any questions, please see Linda Emaelaf or Debbie O'Connor.

Today during Coffee Hour: Kim Siciliano of the YWCA will give a presentation on their work on antiracism.

Christmas Caroling: Come join in singing carols to nursing home residents (including some of St. Stephen's members), staff, and family members! We will meet at Kingsway Arms on Saturday, 12/20, at 3:45. Please sign up in the nave extension so we know how many to expect. We will pass out carol booklets, so you don't need to know all the words. All ages are welcome! And if enough people are interested in a potluck dinner afterward, we'll do that too.

Food for Pantry: Thank you for the food donations! There has been a 20% increase in the number of households served at the Sycamore Collaborative food pantry during the past two months. In November, St. Stephen's donated 151# of food. Please bring in peanut butter or cooking oil. To make your contribution go further, you may also donate online at <https://sycamorecollab.org>.

Wednesday Mornings: You are invited to join Mother Lisa in reading and reflecting on the upcoming Sunday's bible readings from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. No prior study is required, and you can take part on just those mornings when you are able to come for this hour.

Coffee Hour and Altar Flowers - There are new sign-up sheets at the back of the church which will take us through mid-February (coffee hour) and through June (Altar Flowers). We need volunteers! Please consider signing up to host a Sunday.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, 12/8, 7:00 p.m.: Vestry meeting.

Wednesday, 12/10, 10:00 a.m.: Bible Reading and Reflection in the Vestry meeting room.
7:00 p.m.: Bell Choir rehearsal.

Thursday, 12/11, 7:00 p.m.: Chancel Choir rehearsal.

Sunday, 12/14, 9:30 a.m.: Holy Eucharist.

Tuesday, 12/16, 1:00 P.M.: Book Club meeting.

Wednesday, 12/17, 10:00 a.m.: Bible Reading and Reflection in the Vestry meeting room.
7:30 p.m.: Blue Christmas service.

Saturday, 12/20, 3:45 p.m.: Christmas Caroling at Kingsway Arms.

Sunday, 12/21, 9:30 a.m.: Holy Eucharist.

Wednesday, 12/24, 10:00 a.m.: No Bible Reading and Reflections meeting today.
4:30 p.m.: Christmas Eve service (Early)
7:30 p.m.: Christmas Eve service (Late)

Thursday, 12/25, 9:30 a.m.: Christmas Day service.

Sunday, 12/28, 9:30 a.m.: Holy Eucharist.

Wednesday, 12/31, 10:00 a.m.: No Bible Reading and Reflections meeting today.

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Church Staff & Lay Leaders:

Rev. Lisa Busby, Rector

George Woodzell, Senior Warden

Carole Merrill-Mazurek, Junior Warden

Susan Lohnas, Organist

Douglas Lohnas, Director of the Choirs

Jon Ewbank, Office Manager

Denise Crates, Treasurer

Theresa Fay, Clerk

Vestry

Ruth Basantes

Denise Crates

Basil Dewdney

Linda Emaelaf

Vicki Hoshko

Stan Jakubowski

Deborah O'Connor

Jean Stefanski

Welcome!

We are glad you have chosen to worship and give thanks to God with us.

WORSHIP: The Holy Eucharist or Morning Prayer: Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Join us for refreshments most Sundays in Begley Hall after our service.

Members of the parish offer Morning Prayer on Zoom at 9:00 a.m. Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, and 8:00 a.m. on Sunday. Please contact the church office for the link.

Other services are announced.

HYMNS: Our hymns are posted on hymn boards and are listed in our bulletin. They are drawn from the blue *Hymnal* and the black-and-red *Lift Every Voice and Sing*. "Service music," indicated with an "S" before the number, comes at the beginning of the *Hymnal*. Hymns come in the second section. Hymns from *Lift Every Voice and Sing* are preceded by an "LEV."

CHILDREN: We are delighted to have children of all ages and love hearing their voices. We offer a children's sermon when children are present and post a brief children's message each week on our website. The greeters can give them an activity pack. There is a nursery with toys and a comfortable chair if you would like to take a break from the service with your child or find a quiet place to nurse. In the Episcopal Church it is customary for parents to determine the appropriate age for children to take communion. We can always offer "first communion" instruction to you/your children.

COMMUNION: All baptized persons may receive Holy Communion. If you do not wish to take the bread (wafer) or the wine, place your arms across your chest and a member of the clergy will ask God's blessing upon you and on any children not yet receiving communion. If you would like the elements brought to your seat, please speak with a greeter.

FOR THOSE WITH ALLERGIES: If you would like to receive communion wafers that are gluten-wheat-yeast-dairy-egg-soy-nut- and corn-free at Communion, please ask for one from the ministers distributing communion.

OFFERTORY: During the offertory, the greeters take up a collection for funds which support the church and our various ministries. Many people pledge annual support, which is helpful in developing our budget. All contributions are welcomed.

MASKS: The use of masks is optional. The greeters can provide you with one if you like.

CONVERSATION / PASTORAL VISITS are available. Please contact the Parish Office.

MEMBERSHIP: We welcome visitors from other churches as well as those for whom church is a new experience. If you do not have a church home, we would be delighted to talk with you about becoming a member. Please speak with a warden or fill out a pew card for someone to contact you.

LABYRINTH: Our labyrinth, in the courtyard between the church and Begley Hall, is an adaptation of the millennia-old classical type. Unlike a maze, a labyrinth has only one path in and out; there are no tricks or dead ends. The path winds from the exterior to the center and can become a mirror for our journey of life, touching our sorrows and releasing our joys. Walk it with an open mind and an open heart. Instructions are available at the back of the church.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION: Please be in touch with the parish office if you have suggestions for this ministry.

PRAYER REQUESTS: Prayer request sheets can be found on the lectern in the back of the church. You can place anyone on our "Prayer Chain" by contacting Suzanne Taylor at popage@aol.com or by contacting the parish office. Please get the permission of those you add for their names to be used. We will include your request for four weeks in our services of Morning Prayer and count on you to keep us updated.

COMMUNICATION: You may contact us at 518-346-6241 (Office Phone); office@st-stephens.church (e-mail); <https://st-stephens.church> (website); and <https://www.facebook.com/SaintStephensSchenectady>. The Parish Office is generally open Mondays-Fridays from 8:30-11:30 a.m. Mother Lisa Busby can be contacted at 518-637-7736 or revlisabusby@st-stephens.church.