



St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Wilson, NC
An Online Expression of an Ante-Communion Holy Eucharist
Third Sunday of Advent
December 13, 2020

The Rev. James G. Reed – Celebrant and Preacher
Dexter Ruffin, Organist
Lee Stephenson, Lay Reader

Opening Hymn

Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding

H 59

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

COLLECT FOR PURITY

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. **Amen.**

Trisagion (Dexter)

Ho - ly God, ho - ly and might - y, ho - ly im - mor - tal one,
have mer - cy on us. Ho - ly God, ho - ly and might - y,
ho - ly im - mor - tal one, have mer - cy on us.

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Celebrant Let us pray.

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.*

THE LESSON (read by Lee Stephenson)

A Reading from Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 126 (read by Lee Stephenson)

- ¹ When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, *
then were we like those who dream.
- ² Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
and our tongue with shouts of joy.
- ³ Then they said among the nations, *
"The LORD has done great things for them."
- ⁴ The LORD has done great things for us, *
and we are glad indeed.
- ⁵ Restore our fortunes, O LORD, *
like the watercourses of the Negev.
- ⁶ Those who sowed with tears *
will reap with songs of joy.
- ⁷ Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

THE EPISTLE (read by Lee Stephenson)

A Reading from 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SEQUENCE HYMN

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord

H 438

THE GOSPEL

John 1:6-8,19-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of

one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’” as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

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

THE SERMON

The Rev. James G. Reed

NICENE CREED

**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 - FORM III (read by Lee Stephenson)

The Leader and People pray responsively

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;
That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; Sam and Anne, our Bishops; Jim, our priest; and for all bishops, priests, deacons, and those in religious orders.
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for Donald our President, Roy our Governor, and Carlton our Mayor and all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world.
That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on; those who have immediate needs -- Buster Dawson, Bonnie Campbell, Eva Morriss, Bill Wrenn, Dallas Clark, April Lamm, Dick Cozart, Jerry Hamill, Miles Johnson, Chris Perri, Don Doster, William Blake Tucker, Mike Pierce, Eddie Rodriguez, Fannie Lee Dickerson, Bud & Anna Jane Ruffin, Michelle Williams, Ginger Williams, Tom Sheen, those affected by Covid-19, those affected by the lack of respect for the dignity of every person; and, those who have ongoing needs as listed in our website and those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed, eternal rest;
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.
Silence.

Let us pray together:

O gracious God, you know our needs as we continue this journey to recognize and select our new Rector. We pray that You give us a renewed spirit of devotion to this purpose. Let nothing be lost of the faithful work of the past. Give to us the ability to respect, with love and compassion, whatever differences of opinion, thought, and ideas we may have with each other. Finally, we ask Your blessing upon the St. Timothy's family, as we continue to pray for the priest, known to You. All this we ask in Jesus's name, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

We pray for the mission and ministries of our sister Episcopal Churches of St Mark's and Guadalupana.

We pray for our military personnel serving throughout the world, particularly those in war zones. We pray for those affected by terrorism, both domestic and abroad, and for those who protect us from such acts of violence.

We pray for those who are celebrating birthdays this week, especially Watson Barnes, Jane Fleming, Sarah Bradley, Clayton Matthew Stakes, Elizabeth Parker Garrett, Thompson James Holt, Peggy Wilson, Kristine Daynes, Miller Williams, John Boddie Crudup Jr., Dewey B. Sheffield Jr., and Suzanne Hackney.

CONFESSION OF SIN

The Deacon or Celebrant says

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People

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.

The Bishop, when present, or the Priest, stands and says

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. *Amen*

THE BLESSING

THE DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CLOSING VOLUNTARY (Dexter)