



Saint Matthew's Episcopal Church

*Growing in Love to Become One with
God's Purpose*

First Sunday of Advent

November 29, 2020

9:30 a.m.

Prelude: "Revelation Song"

*by Jennie Lee Riddle and arr. By Dan
Galbraith*

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

People: And blessed be God's kingdom for ever and for ever. Amen

Collect

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

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.

Kyrie

Lord have mercy.

Christ have mercy.

Lord have mercy.

Collect of the Day

Let us pray

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.*

A reading from Isaiah 64:1-9

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.

Psalm 80: 1-7, 16-18

Qui regis Israel

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?

5 You 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.

7 Restore 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.

17 And 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

A Reading from 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

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.

Reader: The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Meditation: “*Not By Might*”

by Robin Mark

Chorus

No not by might

Nor even pow'r

But by Your Spirit O Lord

Healer of hearts

Binder of wounds

Lives that are lost restored

Flow through this land

'Til every man

Praises Your name once more

Reading from the Gospel

Mark 13:24-37

Clergy: 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.”

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

The Sermon

Andrew Kellner

The 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

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we may all 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 all bishops, priests, and deacons;
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world; especially for our current President, Donald J. Trump, and President-Elect, Joseph R. Biden.
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 suffer from any grief or trouble especially Terry, Carol, Phil, Mary Lou, Edward, Dick, Karen, Lou, June, Margaret, Constance, Priscilla, Dorothea, and Bob;

That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest, especially remembering Bert and Craig Holt in whose memory the altar flowers are given;

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.

God, our Gracious Shepherd, we offer you our deepest worship and honor for your faithfulness to the people of St. Matthew's through the years. You have blessed us with faithful clergy and leaders who have led us to you, nurtured us in your care, and encouraged us in our work for you. Today, we are particularly grateful that you have led us to our new rector, Father Rodney Roehner, who will walk with us in the next chapter of our common life and ministry. Be with him and his family as they say farewell to their current parish and community and as they prepare to come to us. Provide everything necessary for their life and salvation as they travel and begin to settle in our midst. Prepare our hearts to receive them into our parish family with patience and joy. Provide from your bounty all that we need to follow the mission you have set before us all in the years to come as priest and people. In your most Holy Name we pray. **Amen.**

Confession

Celebrant: Let us confess our sins to God.

Leader and People

Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; in your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone; and so uphold us by your Spirit that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Absolution *Almighty God, have mercy upon 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.*

Sharing of the Peace

- **Holy Communion** -

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer A

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.

It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. For you are the source of light and life, you made us in your image and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord.

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.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

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.

The people stand or kneel.

Then the Celebrant continues

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

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

The Celebrant continues

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

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 breaks the bread.

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the Feast. Alleluia.

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Communion Song: “*Rend the Heavens*”

by Robin Mark

Verse 1

This day we call upon the living Lord
And seek Your mercy and Your grace
How we as a nation have turned our face
Away from You and followed other ways
May we see You as You are
Manifested glorious power Lord Jesus

Chorus

Rend the Heavens and come down
In Your majesty come down
In Your mercy Lord come down upon us
Clothe Yourself in robes of grace
You are welcome in this place
Where the saints are gathered
For Your worship (Lord)

Verse 2

Not for our gain but for the glory
Of Your Name we gather 'round Your throne
And in humble adoration plead for this generation
Jesus let Your Name be known
May they see You as You are
Manifested glorious power Lord Jesus

For Your worship Lord

Closing Prayer

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.*

Blessing

The Blessing of God Almighty: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with you now and always.
Amen.

Parish Announcements

Song of Service: *“Shout to the North”*

by Martin Smith

Verse 1

Men of faith rise up and sing
Of the great and glorious King
You are strong when you feel weak
In your brokenness complete

Verse 3

Rise up church with broken wings
Fill this place with songs again
Of our God who reigns on high
By His grace again we'll fly

Chorus

Shout to the north and the south
Sing to the east and the west
Jesus is Savior to all
Lord of heaven and earth

Bridge

We've been through fire
We've been through rain
We've been refined
By the pow'r of His name
We've fallen deeper
In love with You
You've burned
The truth on our lips

Verse 2

Rise up women of the truth
 Stand and sing to broken hearts
 Who can know the healing pow'r
 Of our awesome King of love

Ending

Lord of heaven and earth
 Lord of heaven and earth
 Lord of heaven and earth

Worship Update from the Rector's Warden

We have some disappointing news, which most of you are probably expecting. Beginning Sunday, November 29, we are shifting from the current modified in-person worship service to 100% virtual. As you are aware, the Covid infection rates are climbing, and we have no reason to expect this trend to reverse anytime soon. We have been watching and hoping for the rates to decline, or even flatten - but they have not.

After having numerous conversations, consulting with Father Rodney, and reviewing the cautionary directive from the Bishop, we believe the prudent decision is to refrain from in-person services for the foreseeable future. This decision does not come lightly, but we feel by being pro-active with this decision we help protect the health of our congregation, staff and community. Secondly, by making this decision now, we can focus all our energy and planning for the best possible online service experience.

To be clear, **services on November 29 through December 13 will be streamed on Facebook Live at both 8:00 a.m and 9:30 a.m.** We may have additional changes after December 13, as Father Rodney will be joining us on December 20. We plan for Christmas Eve services to also be virtual only, with more details to follow.

I appreciate your patience as we work through the details, but in the meantime, please feel free to call me with any questions.

Chris Suhy, Rector's Warden

FROM THE VESTRY

Welcome Newly Elected Vestry Members: Nancy Austin, John Gill, Karen Sawyer
Rotating off with our thanks: Joe Buesgen, Tim Jennings, Chris Strittmatter

LIFE LONG LEARNING MINISTRY

Adult Lifelong Learning Forum: Continues this morning at 11:00 AM. Led by a group of rotating leaders, the forum aims to focus on understanding the root causes of systemic racism, and how Christians are called to respond. Join the forum every Sunday at 11:00 AM on *Zoom* here:

<https://zoom.us/j/98376656289?pwd=QmFGa1AxRmpYc1NuLzNKbjNRa1FtQT09>

Christmas Pageant 2020: It remains a challenge for Saint Matthew's to gather in person during this most special and holy season. In times like these, I wonder how technology might bring us together?

What is a virtual pageant? A *virtual pageant* means that we won't be performing inside of our church building this year. Instead, we'll each record our lines in advance, combine them together, and interact with a recording being streamed live to our homes. Though this experience might feel new and maybe even a bit strange, *do not be afraid!* With your help, all of us will be able to create a memorable, joyful, and holy memory as Saint Matthew's this year.

How will it work?

Anyone can participate, but we will prioritize children for the major roles! After you or your family signs up as a participant, they'll be sent a few lines from our pageant script. From there we'll ask you to record those lines, and send them to us when you're done. We'll stitch all of the clips from Saint Matthew's together into one pageant *movie*, which you'll be able to interact with at your home during the Advent and Christmas seasons. You'll also be able to keep pageant forever, and send it to your loved ones with the click of a button.

What Now?

We're asking families to sign-up to participate by heading to: <https://tinyurl.com/yyekqzqf> Around December 8th, we'll send your family a few lines to record — we'll ask if you'd like to create your own costumes, or if you'd like Saint Matthew's to lend you a few of our own. Once you record your lines, we'll show you how to send them to us. We ask that you do this before **December 20th**.

Who Do I Go To With Questions?

Reach out to a member of the Pageant Team! Anthony Carrella, Janine Buesgen, Antonia Edwards, and Martha Reynolds.

Parish Transition Committee

The Rvd. Rodney Roehner, his wife Carolina, and their twin daughters Alexa and Sophia will arrive in Pennsylvania at or around December 7th. While the family's residence in Lower Gwynedd is being prepared, they will reside in a comfortable, local AirBNB. The Transition Committee invites you in welcoming Fr. Rodney for yourself! Choose a welcoming option that works best for you and your family this season.

Send a Word of Welcome

Say hello to Fr. Rodney and his family by sharing a word of welcome here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y3nprkg6>. Entries will be compiled into a parish-wide welcome card.

You may also choose to write a physical card and mail it to Saint Matthew's Church, c/o Anthony Carrella.

Recommend Favorite Local Opportunities

Submit a recommendation of your favorite restaurants, recreational, cultural, and family opportunities in the area here: <https://tinyurl.com/y3nprkg6>

Purchase Groceries for the *Pounding of the Pantry*

Sign-up to purchase grocery staples here: <https://tinyurl.com/y6xabtck> as we *pound* Fr. Rodney's pantry.

Prepare and Deliver a Home-cooked Meal

Sign-up to make a family-style meal during over a six week period here: <https://tinyurl.com/y57e7pjb>.

Donate Toward a Welcome Gift

Contribute toward a gift card for Fr. Rodney (under \$50) here:

<https://saintmattsec.org/giving> Click "Make an Online Gift" and you may choose a gift type. Alternatively, you may also choose to send your contribution to Saint Matthew's Church, c/o Carolyn Bedics.



Welcome to another
year of collecting
bears for Operation
Bear Hug!

Saint Matthew's is spreading Christmas cheer by collecting and donating brand-new bears to local centers including [Fox Subacute](#) and other senior residences in our community. We are hoping for a record-breaking year — our goal is to collect over 300 bears!

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

- Purchase a brand-new bear and drop it off in the boxes by the kitchen, or outside St. Matthew's (919 Tennis Ave, Maple Glen) in the plastic bins at the lower parking lot entrance to the Narthex.

- Purchase a brand-new bear online via an online retailer or Amazon (<https://tinyurl.com/operationbearhug2020> for options) and send to Lisa Walsh. Her home address is below.
- Make a donation through our online giving page <https://tithe.ly/give?c=1645637> by choosing “Operation Bear Hug” from the dropdown menu, and we will purchase bears for you!

Please help us make someone feel special and loved this Christmas season, especially since so many are unable to be with their loved ones.