



SAINT FRANCIS IN THE VALLEY
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Green Valley, Arizona

The Very Rev. Dr. Warren Leibovitch, *Rector*
The Rev. Becky Williamson, *Deacon*
The Rev. Linda Hutson, *Deacon*

THE HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE TWO
THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
10 DECEMBER 2023

ORGAN PRELUDE

On Jordan's Bank

Malcolm Archer, b. 1952

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN 56 *stanzas 3 & 4*

3. O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times didst give the law,
in cloud, and majesty, and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel!

4. O come, thou Branch of Jesse's tree,
free them from Satan's tyranny
that trust thy mighty power to save,
and give them victory o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel!

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Officiant Our King and Savior now draws near.

People *O come, let us adore him. Alleluia!*

Officiant We light a second candle on our Advent Wreath recalling the peace we are given through Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace.

(The second candle is lighted.)

Let us pray. Loving God, we thank you for the true and lasting peace you bring to our hearts and lives through your son, Jesus. Help us prepare our hearts for his presence, his life, his way.

People *To you, O Lord, we lift up our souls: In you, O God, we trust.*

THE OPENING SENTENCE

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

People *And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.*

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 S100: the People are invited to join the choir.*

Trisagion is traditionally sung three times.)

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

THE SALUTATION

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People *And also with you.*

Celebrant Let us pray.

THE COLLECT

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.

Amen.

THE FIRST LESSON *(please be seated)*

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah (40:1-11).

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 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. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever. Get you up to a high moun-

tain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Reader The Word of the Lord
People Thanks be to God.

THE PSALM (85:1-2, 8-13) *Please respond after the asterisk.*

- | | | | |
|---|---|----|--|
| 1 | You have been gracious to your land,
O LORD, * you have restored the good
fortune of Jacob. | 10 | Mercy and truth have met together; *
righteousness and peace have kissed
each other. |
| 2 | You have forgiven the iniquity of your
people * and blotted out all their sins. | 11 | Truth shall spring up from the earth, *
and righteousness shall look down
from heaven. |
| 8 | I will listen to what the LORD God is
saying, * for he is speaking peace to
his faithful people and to those who
turn their hearts to him. | 12 | The LORD will indeed grant prosper-
ity, * and our land will yield its in-
crease. |
| 9 | Truly, his salvation is very near to
those who fear him, * that his glory
may dwell in our land. | 13 | Righteousness shall go before him, *
and peace shall be a pathway for his
feet. |

The Epistle

A Reading from the Second Letter of Peter (3:8-15a).

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that 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, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL HYMN 76

1. On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings.
2. Then cleansed be every breast from sin;
make straight the way for God within,
and let each heart prepare a home
where such a mighty guest may come.
3. For thou art our salvation, Lord,
our refuge, and our great reward;
- without thy grace we waste away
like flowers that wither and decay.
4. To heal the sick stretch out thine hand,
and bid the fallen sinner stand;
shine forth, and let thy light restore
earth's own true loveliness once more.
5. All praise, eternal Son, to thee,
whose advent doth thy people free;
whom with the Father we adore
and Holy Spirit evermore.

THE GOSPEL *(please stand, as you are able)*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Mark (1:1-8).

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,"

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Reader The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

THE SERMON: The Very Rev. Dr. Warren Leibovitch

THE 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 Fa-

ther. 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 worshipped 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 VI) *The people may stand, sit, or kneel*
Leader In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

Silence

For all people in their daily life and work;
For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.

For this community, the nation, and the world;
For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation;
For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;
For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;
For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

For Michael our Presiding Bishop, and Jennifer our Bishop; and
for all bishops and other ministers;
For all who serve God in his Church.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

Silence

Hear us, Lord;
For your mercy is great.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life.

Silence (The People may add their own thanksgivings)

We will exalt you, O God our King;
And praise your Name for ever and ever.

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.

Silence

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;
Who put their trust in you.

Almighty God, source of all wisdom and understanding: Look graciously on your church, and so guide the hearts and minds of those who will choose our next presiding bishop, that we may receive a faithful pastor who will care for all your people, equip us for our ministries, and proclaim your word to us and to the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We acknowledge the native peoples of the land on which we stand:
*We pay our respects to the Pasqua Yaqui and Pima tribes
for their care of this land.*

We pray to you also for the forgiveness of our sins.
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.

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. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

All stand. The Celebrant says to the people
The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

THE OFFERTORY

*Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us,
an offering and sacrifice to God. (Ephesians 5:2)*

AT THE OFFERTORY

David Thorne, b. 1950

Hark! the glad sound! the Savior comes, the Savior promised long: let every heart prepare a throne, and every voice a song. He comes, the prisoners to release in Satan's bondage held; the gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield. He comes, the broken

heart to bind, the wounded soul to cure; and with the treasures of his grace enrich the humble poor. Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace, thy welcome shall proclaim; and heaven's eternal arches ring with thy beloved Name. Amen. (words: P. Doddridge, 1702-51)

AT THE PRESENTATION

Celebrant Almighty God, accept all we offer you this day,
and give us generous hearts to serve you in
all who claim your help.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

People Amen.

AT THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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 It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

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 for ever 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 may stand, sit, or kneel.

Celebrant 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.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

Celebrant And now, as our Savior

Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

Together 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.

AT THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD, AGNUS DEI (*Hymnal S161*)

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.*

Celebrant The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

All baptized Christians are invited to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The elements are offered at the Communion Rail and may be received either kneeling or standing. Wine is received by intinction only. If you would like to receive a blessing only, please cross your arms over your chest. Please remember to follow Usher's directions.

PRAYER FOR THE SENDING FORTH OF EUCHARISTIC VISITORS (TO BE SAID BY ALL)

In the name of this congregation we send you forth bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us in the Communion of Christ's body and blood. We, who are many, are one body, because we all share one bread, one cup.

THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Celebrant Let us pray.

Together Almighty and everliving God,
we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food
of the most precious Body and Blood
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries
that we are living members of the Body of your Son,
and heirs of your eternal kingdom.
And now, Father, send us out
to do the work you have given us to do,
to love and serve you
as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

THE BLESSING

CLOSING HYMN 65

1. Prepare the way, O Zion,
your Christ is drawing near!
Let every hill and valley
a level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory,
foretold in sacred story.
Oh, blest is Christ that came
in God's most holy Name.
2. He brings God's rule, O Zion;
he comes from heaven above.
His rule is peace and freedom,
and justice, truth, and love.

- Lift high your praise resounding,
for grace and joy abounding.
Oh, blest is Christ that came
in God's most holy Name.
3. Fling wide your gates, O Zion;
your Savior's rule embrace.
His tidings of salvation
proclaim in every place.
All lands will bow before him,
their voices will adore him.
Oh, blest is Christ that came
in God's most holy Name.

THE DISMISSAL

ORGAN POSTLUDE

Wilbur Held, 1914-2015

Prepare the way, O Zion

We Welcome You

A WARM WELCOME to all and, if you are a visitor, we encourage you to make yourself known to your fellow worshippers and to our St. Francis clergy. If you would like to know more about the Parish, please speak with Fr. Warren or get in touch with him via email at frwarren@stfranciscgvaz.org. Please take a moment to fill out a visitor card and hand it to an usher or one of the clergy, or place it in the offering basket. We would love to hear from you.

Musical Moments

This morning you are invited to join the Parish Choir in singing two important liturgical pieces: the TRISAGION and the AGNUS DEI. The TRISAGION (Greek: pronounced tree-SAH-ghee-own) is often sung—in the seasons of Advent and Lent—in place of the GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO (*Glory to God in the highest*), right after the opening sentences

(page 2). It is traditionally sung three times. TRISAGION comes from the Eastern liturgical tradition, as does KYRIE ELEISON (*Lord, have mercy*; also Greek and often sung during Lent in place of the GLORIA). The AGNUS DEI (*Lamb of God*) stems from the Latin tradition; it is sung immediately after the Celebrant 'breaks' the bread (thus it is known as a 'fraction' anthem) and before the invitation to communion (page 9). The musical settings we will be singing were written by the distinguished American composer David Hurd. The tunes are not unfamiliar, so do join in. (Of course you then run the risk of being invited to join the Parish Choir.) *Gerald*

Christmas Shopping at the Boutique

Christmas will be here before you know it! We have beautiful Creche sets, all sizes at prices you're going to love, as well as many unique decorative items. It's easy shopping,

so bring your coffee and come see after the 9 o'clock service. And remember, when you shop with us you're helping the Green Valley community, as all profits go to the Rector's Discretionary Fund. What a perfect way to shop, remembering the needy while acquiring beautiful holiday items. *Jylene Wright*

This Week at St. Francis

Monday, 10a	Handbells, Loft
Tuesday, 10a	Advent Study, Parish Hall
Tuesday, 4p	Vestry, Conference Rm
Wednesday, 9a	Holy Eucharist, Chapel
Wednesday, 10a	DOK Christmas Lunch, Parish Hall
Wednesday, 10a	Memorials Committee, St. Francis Room
Thursday, 2p	Parish Choir, Loft
Saturday, 5p	Christmas Card Party, Parish Hall

You're invited to...

...the annual St. Francis Covenant Fund CHRISTMAS CARD PARTY, Saturday, December 16, at 5 PM in the Parish Hall. The price of admission is a Christmas card for the entire Parish and a donation to the COVENANT FUND. Here's how it works: instead of purchasing and mailing Christmas cards to all your St. Francis friends, just get one card and bring it to the party. Your card will be used to decorate a Christmas tree in the Parish Hall for everyone to enjoy. Contribute the money you save on cards and postage to the COVENANT FUND by including a check with your card. Money from the fund provides financial assistance to St. Francis parishioners in need.

The party is being catered so you're asked to let us know you'll be there by signing up at the SOCIAL ACTIVITIES table in the Parish Hall after services.

Blue Christmas

Not all people find the Christmas and New Year holidays a time of joy, but rather a time of loneliness, sorrow, pain, or grief. In recognition of these "blue" feelings, St. Francis will offer a Blue Christmas service on Sunday, December 17, at 3 PM. Please join us—and invite any friends or neighbors who may be experiencing such blue feelings—to this service of readings, prayer, and some music appropriate to the season. We pray that those who experience these holidays as not very merry or bright will come and find hope and comfort in knowing that they are not alone.

Christmas Flowers

If you would like to give a gift of Christmas flowers in memory of loved ones or in thanksgiving for God's many blessings, please fill out a CHRISTMAS FLOWERS REQUEST FORM and return it to the Parish Office by Monday, December 18. The forms are available on tables in the Narthex and at the front of the church on Sunday mornings and in the Parish Office during the week.

Your gently-read books needed

The St. Francis Library Committee will be hosting a massive book sale—not just of religious books, but all kinds of books—in February 2024. So why publicize this now? Because we need all the books in your home that you've already read (or given up on) and need/want to get rid of and would like to donate for our sale! The money generated from the sale will be used to support our digital catalog and buy new books for the library. Please bring your gently-read books to the St. Francis library during the month of December 2023, leaving them in the corner to the left of the Library door.

Hearts & Hands Ministries

▶ **VALLEY ASSISTANCE:** VA helps folks in need by providing bar soap, laundry and dish washing detergent, ammonia (or glass cleaner), toilet paper, tampons, sanitary pads (regular or medium, or overnight-style with wings). You can help by purchasing some of these items, bringing them to church and depositing them in the labeled, purple container in the Sexton's closet (Southwest corner of the Parish Hall).

▶ **LOCAL FOOD BANKS:** We continue to collect non-perishable items for our local Food Banks. Monetary donations are welcome too, simply write your check payable to St. Francis with Green Valley Food Bank in the Memo line and we'll take care of the rest. Drop your check in the Offering Basket on Sunday morning, or drop it off at the Parish Office during the week.

▶ **VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED** to deliver these gifts to the Food Bank on Continental any time during the week. If you are willing to take one month, please pick your month and *email behook@aol.com*.

▶ **DON'T FORGET:** the Sahuarita Food Bank collects cardboard (cereal box style too). The receptacle is on the south side of the Food Bank building, on La Cañada.

Forward Day by Day

Daily devotional booklets for November, December, and January (2024), are now available in the Parish Office and Parish Hall.

Prayer Chain

For Prayer Chain requests contact Jim Ratley at 253-365-5093 or, via email, *jnrats@gmail.com*

Our Prayer Lists

Our St. Francis congregation is an important and lively source of prayer for those in our midst who are suffering illness or loss. Please help us keep our prayer lists current by letting us know when prayers are needed—and for whom—and when they are, thankfully, no longer needed. Names read during the Sunday liturgy should, with discretion, be of parishioners and their immediate family members—and close friends—in urgent need of our supplications. In some cases the PRAYER CHAIN might be the most appropriate ministry (see above) and, in other cases, posting a name in the PRAYER REQUESTS section of the Sunday service leaflet may serve to keep your loved one's name(s) before your fellow parishioners as well as before our extended Parish family, friends and visitors (see below). If prayers are needed, they will be offered.

Prayer Requests

Remembering those in need of our prayers: Paul Witte, Henry Witte, John Witte, Dick Kosnick, Bob Vint, Sr., Kelly Davis, Eileen Fanning, Sandra Findley, Shirley Underwood, Amanda, Frank Brown, Delilah Wegrzyn, Tom Moorhead, Elaine & Paul Deysenroth, Anne Charter, Linda Greenwald, Ken Jakubiak, Stephen Schwarzmann, Jan Hall, Charles Gardner, Ellen Vowells, Annette

Remembering those who have died: Ian Gunderson (son of Dawn Wagaman)

St. Francis in the Valley
Episcopal Church

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