



## **First Sunday *of* Advent**

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**St. Thomas' Episcopal Church  
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**St. Nicholas Day  
The First Sunday of Advent  
9:30 AM Holy Eucharist, December 3, 2017**

## Announcements and Welcome

### Opening Hymn: O Come O Come Emmanuel

#56 (vs. 1-3)

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

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

### First Sunday of Advent

Today we light the first candle of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning.

Reader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

People: *those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined.*

Reader: We join with sisters and brothers around the world, lighting candles to mark our steps in this Advent journey.

People: *Today, we light the candle of Hope.*

Reader: Even though the world seems dark and cold, we know that the light of Christ is coming. The face of our Lord will shine, and we shall be saved!

People: *Testifying against all suffering and darkness, we kindle this light. Together, we proclaim to the world that, in Christ, we have hope.*

### Trisagion: Holy God (3x)

Ho - ly God, Ho-ly and Might - y, Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One,  
Have mer - cy up - on us.

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: *And also with you.*

Celebrant: Let us pray.

*Almighty God, in your love you gave your servant Nicholas of Myra a perpetual name for deeds of kindness both on land and sea: Grant, we pray, that your Church may never cease to work for the happiness of children, the safety of sailors, the relief of the poor, and the help of those tossed by tempests of doubt and grief; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.*

## **The Lessons:**

### **Proverbs 19:17,20–23**

Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord,  
and will be repaid in full.

Listen to advice and accept instruction,  
that you may gain wisdom for the future.

The human mind may devise many plans,  
but it is the purpose of the Lord that will be established.

What is desirable in a person is loyalty,  
and it is better to be poor than a liar.

The fear of the Lord is life indeed;  
filled with it one rests secure  
and suffers no harm.

Reader:       The Word of the Lord.

People:        *Thanks be to God.*

### **Psalm 145:8–13**

8 The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, \*  
slow to anger and of great kindness.

9 The Lord is loving to everyone \*  
and his compassion is over all his works.

10 All your works praise you, O Lord, \*  
and your faithful servants bless you.

11 They make known the glory of your kingdom \*  
and speak of your power;

12 That the peoples may know of your power \*  
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; \*  
your dominion endures throughout all ages.

### **A Reading from 1 John 4:7–14**

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

*People: Thanks be to God.*

### **Hymn: Stay Awake! Be Ready! (Children's Anthem)**

*The Celebrant reads the Gospel, first saying*

The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark 10:13–16

*People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.*

People were bringing little children to Jesus in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord

*People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

### **The Sermon**

**Mr. Kenny Daniels**

### **The Nicene Creed**

**pg. 358**

### **Prayers of the People**

Brothers and sisters, as we joyfully await the full manifestation of God's reign in Christ, let us pray for the needs of the church and the world.

**O Wisdom**, you come forth from the mouth of the Most High and reach from beginning to end, mightily and sweetly ordering all things. Behold and bless your church, remembering especially Michael, our Presiding Bishop, Eugene and Chilton, our Bishops, Loree our Priest, Jan and Vern our Wardens, our Vestry, and the people of our church family. Be present in ordering the life of this and every congregation.

*O God, hear us; hear our prayer.*

**O Adonai**, God of the Covenant, ruler of the house of Israel, you appeared to Moses in the fire

of the burning bush and on Mount Sinai gave your law. Forgive us when we stray from your guidance and will.

*O God, hear us; hear our prayer.*

**O Root of Jesse**, you stand as an ensign to humankind; before you rulers will shut their mouths, and nations bow in worship: We pray for your peace and justice in every nation and throughout the world; be present to all whose lives are ravaged by war and strife; especially we hold before you those from among us who serve their country abroad...

Guide the leaders of this and every land into the paths of peace and goodwill.

*O God, hear us; hear our prayer.*

**O Key of David**, and scepter of the house of Israel, you open and no one can shut, you shut and no one can open: Guide us in opening the doors of opportunity for the unemployed, for the homeless, for prisoners, and for all who are oppressed; and lead us in closing the doors that lead to poverty, bigotry, and injustice.

*O God, hear us; hear our prayer.*

**O King of the Nations** and their Desire, you are the cornerstone that makes us one: We lift up all who are suffering and in need, especially.... Tend the sick, give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous and help us minister to them in your love.

*O God, hear us; hear our prayer.*

**O Dayspring**, radiance of the Light Eternal and Sun of Righteousness: Shine your light on those who have died; remember especially those we now name..., and bring comfort to all those who mourn.

*O God, hear us; hear our prayer.*

Celebrant:

**O Emmanuel**, God with us, Expected One and Saviour, We give thanks for all the blessings of this life; make each of us ready to receive you into our hearts, to serve you in all whom we meet, and to greet you in the fullness of your glory in the day of your appearing.

<b>The Confession</b>	<b>pg.360</b>
<b>The Peace</b>	<b>pg. 360</b>
<b>The Blessing of Birthdays and Wedding Anniversaries</b>	<b>pg. 830</b>
<b>The Offertory: Let all mortal flesh keep silence</b>	<b>#324</b>
<b>The Doxology</b>	<b>#380 (vs. 3)</b>

~~ The Holy Communion ~~

**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 our 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.  
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**

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

*Please stand or kneel as you are able.*

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

*Celebrant and People:*  
*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 St. Thomas and 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.

*Celebrant and People:*  
Blessed are you now and forever.  
*AMEN.*

**The Lord's Prayer**

**#364**

**The Breaking of the Bread**

**The Communion of the People** (*St. Thomas' extends the invitation to all baptized members of any Christian Church to receive the consecrated bread and wine.*)

**Communion: Creator of the stars of night**

**#60**

**Post Communion Prayer**

**pg. 365**

**The Blessing**

**Recessional Hymn: Come thou long expected Jesus**

**#66**

**Dismissal:** Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
People: *Thanks be to God.*

# CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 4th

Monday, 4th

- 7pm- NA Meeting (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, 5th

- 6:30pm- EfM (Fellowship Hall)

Wednesday, 6th

- 7pm- City Light Music Practice (Church)

Thursday, 7th

- 2pm- Johns Hopkins Parkinsons (Fellowship Hall)
- 7:30pm- Music Practice

Friday, 8th

- 7pm- Private Event (Fellowship Hall)
- 7pm- AA Meeting (Room 7)
- 8pm- A Wonderful Life (Sanctuary)

Saturday, 9th

- 8am- Work Day
- 3pm- Private Event (Fellowship Hall)
- 8pm- A Wonderful Life (Sanctuary)

Sunday, 10th

- 9:30am- Worship
- 10:30am- Vestry Meeting (Room 6)
- 11:30am- City Light Worship
- 4pm- A Wonderful Life (Sanctuary)

~ Announcements ~

**Altar Guild:** For the month of December the Wafers are given in memory of Martha Gaylor by George Gaylor, the Wine is given in memory of Frank Hood by Chuck Booth, the Branch Candles are given in memory of Catherine Stultz by Jim Stultz, the Eucharist Candles are given in memory of George and Marjorie Booth by Chuck Booth, the Sanctuary Candle is given in memory of Stephan Timchula and Sandra Timchula by Eve Timchula. The flowers on the altar are given in memory of Melvin and Diane Carlson by Trish Carlson. Dedications for Wine and the Sanctuary Candle, as well as Christmas Memorials, are still available for the month of December. The cost of each memorial is \$25. Please contact Diane Flayhart, [410-426-4618](tel:410-426-4618) or [dflayhart.stthomas@gmail.com](mailto:dflayhart.stthomas@gmail.com), or the church office, [410-821-5489](tel:410-821-5489), if you are interested in reserving a memorial. Thank you.

**Today is St. Nicholas' Day!**

St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, will visit us today during the 9:30 service. St. Nicholas was a saint from the 5th century who is famous for leaving gold in the shoes of three girls in desperate need. His gift to them changed the course of their lives. After the service please join us for our coffee hour.

**CHRISTMAS VILLAGE BAZAAR!** Thank you to all who helped make the Christmas Bazaar a success! To those who donated their time and effort preparing for the event and to those who came out to support St. Thomas'. Your generosity and holiday spirit are greatly appreciated!

**Salvation Army stockings are available in the Narthex.** Please take one and fill it for a needy child. The filled stockings need to be returned by Sunday **December 10th**. You can place them in the brides room. Thank you in advance for your support for this great community outreach effort.

**Theology on Tap has been cancelled until further notice.**

**A WONDERFUL LIFE: THE MUSICAL:** Third Wall Productions presents A Wonderful Life, The Musical here at St. Thomas' on DECEMBER: 08, 09, 15 & 16 at 8:00 PM, and DECEMBER 10 & 17 at 4:00 PM. The story of George Bailey and his wonderful life in Bedford Falls remains a timeless fable of dreams, disillusionment and the power of love. An uplifting chronicle of the extraordinary lives of ordinary folk, A WONDERFUL LIFE exhilarates the mind and heart as it celebrates the innate goodness in us all. Tickets are \$20, or \$15 for students with ID and children 12 and under, and available online at [www.thirdwall.org](http://www.thirdwall.org) or at the door. Partial proceeds will be donated to St. Thomas' Church.

**Fruit Sales:** Order your fruit by calling the church office at 410-821-5489, sending us an email at [stthomastowson@gmail.com](mailto:stthomastowson@gmail.com), from our website, [www.stthomastowson.org](http://www.stthomastowson.org), or by mailing your order form to the office. To pick up your fruit, arrive on the delivery day between 9am-11am to pay for your order. The next date of sales will be on Saturday, **December 16th**.

**Prayers for Healing are requested for those who are ill or in any need:** Alyssa Formwalt, John Wyatt, Michael B., Joshua Birch, Keith, David Harper, Dan Licht, Leigh, Pete, Dowell S., Mary, Jan Jr., Bill D., Rick D., Nan F, Thomas Moran, Chris O. and David J.

**And for those who are homebound:** Theresa Welsch, Ronnie Livengood, Mary Shorter, Nan Fitzgerald, Charles and Susan Harryman, Carrie Hemberger, Susan Herring, Matti and Lillian Kassir, Ellen Monahan, and Connie Waxter.

**Church Office Hours:**  
**Monday-Friday, 12:30-4:30pm, 410-821-5489**  
[stthomastowson@gmail.com](mailto:stthomastowson@gmail.com) / [www.stthomastowson.org](http://www.stthomastowson.org)

**Rev. Loree Penner, Rector**  
443-377-9048

**Jan Bahner, Sr. Warden**  
443-564-9464

**Vern Adams, Jr. Warden**  
443-257-6013

# The Story of St. Nicholas of Myra



Once upon a time there lived far away in the East a pious man, the Bishop Nicholas. One day he heard that far in the West was a big town. In this town all the people had to suffer hunger, the children also. Then Bishop Nicholas called his servants who loved him and said to them 'Bring me the fruits of your gardens and the fruits of your fields that we can still the hunger of the children in that town.' The servants brought baskets full of apples and nuts, and on top lay honey cakes which the women had baked, and the men brought sacks of wheat. Bishop Nicholas had all these things taken onto a ship. It was a beautiful ship, quite white and the sails of the ship were as blue as the sky and as blue as the mantle of the Bishop Nicholas. The wind blew into the sails and sped the ship along, And when the wind grew tired the servants took to the oars and rowed the ship westward. They had to sail for a longtime; for seven days and seven nights.

When they arrived in front of the big town it was evening. The roads were empty, but in the houses there burnt lights. Bishop Nicholas knocked at a window. The mother in the house thought a late wanderer had come and she asked her child to open the door. Nobody was outside. The child ran to the window. There was nobody outside the window either. But instead, there stood a basket filled with apples and nuts, red and yellow, and a honey cake lay on top. By the basket stood a sack which was bursting with golden wheat grains. All the people ate the gifts and once again became healthy and happy.

Today St. Nicholas is in the heavens. Every year on his birthday he starts on his journey down to the earth. He asks for his white horse and journeys from star to star. There he meets Mother Mary, who gathers silver and golden threads for the shift of the Christ Child. Mother Mary says to him: "Dear St. Nicholas please go again to the children and bring them your gifts. Tell them, 'Christmas is nigh and soon the Christ Child will come.'"

The earth is wide and great. There, where St. Nicholas cannot go himself, he asks a good and pious person to go to the children and take them apples and nuts and tell the children of the coming of the Christ Child.

# St. Nicholas of Myra



Santa Claus was a real person named Nicholas, a bishop of the Christian church in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. He became known as St. Nicholas because of the miracles he performed on behalf of children and the poor.