

St. John's Episcopal Church

A place to discover connections with God and one another

www.sjparish.net



The Fourth Sunday of Advent

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

December 18, 2016

10:30 a.m.

An Advent Message from the Rector

This is the season of Advent, a time of paradox. Advent is both beginnings and endings as we prepare to encounter the Mystery of God in our very midst. We are invited to enter into a time of quiet contemplation as we anticipate God breaking into human history in the shape of a tiny, fragile infant we will welcome as the Christ Child. At the same time we wait for the day of the Lord's coming. In this in-between time, we wait with hope in the darkness of winter for the light of Christ to come into the world. Advent is the beginning of a new church year, with the focus on a particular gospel in our Sunday lectionary readings. This year, we will read from Matthew's gospel. These four weeks of Advent are an opportunity to listen to that still small voice within, beckoning each one of us to stop and set some time apart from our busy holiday preparations to simply be with God. Time spent with the Holy One is to experience the greatest gift of all: God's extravagant outpouring of love and mercy made manifest on Christmas morning. There is no greater gift.

If you are with us for the first time, please make yourself comfortable, and stay for coffee following the service. We look forward to meeting you. If you would like to learn more about the church, please fill out a card (hanging in each pew), put it in the offering plate or hand it to an usher or member of the clergy, and we will be in touch. It is our custom to be silent before the service, so as you take some time to pray, please turn off all electronic devices. All you should need to participate in the service is found, here, in this bulletin and in the blue hymnal in the pew rack. Hearing assist devices are available as is nursery care. Please ask the ushers for assistance with these or with any other request. Again, welcome.

The photo on the front of the bulletin, by parishioner Ginny Kemp, is of the Good Shepherd window, located in the Parish House corridor facing the Cloister Garden. It is dedicated to John Heron Brooks by his family. The window was installed in 1983, and designed by the Wilbur Burnham Studios of Boston, one of our nation's premier stained glass makers. At the same time, Burnham was also designing many of our clerestory windows. Photograph © Virginia Kemp 2016.

ORDER OF SERVICE

CHORAL VOLUNTARY Ave Maria

Franz Biebl (1906-2001)

Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae et concepit de Spiritu sancto.

The angel of God visited Maria and she conceived of the Holy Spirit. *(John Nowacki, soloist)*

Maria dixit: Ecce ancilla Domini. Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.

Maria said: See the servant of the Lord. May it happen to me according to your word. *(Doug Engwall, soloist)*

Et Verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us. *(Lynn Brooks, soloist)*

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

Benedicta tu in mulieribus,

Blessed art thou among women,

et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Iesus.

and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN 83 O come, all ye faithful (v. 1, 2, 3 & 6)

ADESTE FIDELIS

All stand and sing.

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come, and behold him, born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord.

God from God, Light from Light eternal,
lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb;
only begotten Son of the Father;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God, glory in the highest;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Heather Simson and Christoph Stretz

Reader #1 We light this candle as a symbol of God's love for us and our love for one another.

Reader #2 For the Lord rejoices over us with gladness, and renews us in his love. He exults over us with singing and turns our shame to praise.

All **Come, Lord Jesus, come!**

THE RECTOR'S WELCOME

THE BIDDING PRAYER

Narrator 1 Dear people of God, in the Christmas season, let it be our duty and delight to once more hear the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger. Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against God until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy child Jesus, and let us make this place glad with our carols of praise. But first, let us pray for the needs of the world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which Christ died, and especially for the church in our country and in this city.

Narrator 2 And because the Christ child particularly loves them, let us remember in His name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and the little children, as well as all who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ. Finally, let us remember before God our Lord's pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore. And now, to sum up all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying:

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, the power, and the glory,
 for ever and ever. Amen.

Narrator 2 Almighty God, bless us with His grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above, may the King of Angels bring us all. Amen.

THE ANNUNCIATION

All sit.

HYMN 56 O come, O come, Emmanuel (v. 1, 4 & 7)

VENI, VENI EMMANUEL

All sing.

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
 that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

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

O come, Desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind;
 bid thou our sad divisions cease, and be thyself our King of Peace.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

THE ARRIVAL IN BETHLEHEM

HYMN 79 O little town of Bethlehem (v. 1 & 2)

ST. LOUIS

All sing.

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
 Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
 yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
 the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,
 while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
 O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
 And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

THE SHEPHERDS

HYMN 94 While shepherds watched their flocks by night (v. 1, 2 & 6) WINCHESTER OLD
All sing.

**While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
 all seated on the ground,
 the angel of the Lord came down,
 and glory shone around.**

**“Fear not,” said he, for mighty dread
 had seized their troubled mind;
 “Glad tidings of great joy I bring
 to you and all mankind.”**

**“All glory be to God on high
 and on the earth be peace;
 good will henceforth from heaven to men
 begin and never cease.”**

THE ANGELS DANCE

ANTHEM Sussex Carol English Carol
 arr. David Willcocks (1919 – 2015)

On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring –
 News of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful King’s birth.
 Then why should men on earth be so sad, since our Redeemer made us glad?
 When from our sin he set us free, all for to gain our liberty?
 When sin departs before his grace, then life and health come in its place,
 Angels and mortals with joy may sing, all for to see the newborn King.
 All out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night:
 “Glory to God and peace on earth, now and forevermore. Amen.”

THE ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS

HYMN 96 Angels we have heard on high (v. 1, 2 & 3) GLORIA
All sing.

**Angels we have heard on high,
 singing sweetly through the night,
 and the mountains in reply,
 echoing their brave delight.
 Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**Shepherds, why this jubilee?
 Why these songs of happy cheer?
 What great brightness did you see?
 What glad tidings did you hear?
 Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

HYMN 83 O come, all ye faithful (refrain only)
All sing.

ADESTE FIDELES

**O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord.**

HYMN 109 The first Nowell (v. 1 & 2)
All sing.

THE FIRST NOWELL

**The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields as they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.**

**They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far,
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.**

THE OFFERTORY

The ushers will pass the offering plates while the narrators tell the story of the Magi.

THE MAGI

HYMN 128 We three kings
All sing refrain and verse 5.

THREE KINGS OF ORIENT

***O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!***

**Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and sacrifice;
Heav'n sings alleluia: alleluia the earth replies.**

SILENT NIGHT

HYMN 111 Silent night
All sing verse 3.

STILLE NACHT

**Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth. Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

THE BLESSING

The people respond, Amen.

THE HYMN IN PROCESSION 100 Joy to the world

ANTIOCH

All stand and sing.

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come;
let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven nature sing, and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and heaven and nature sing.**

**Joy to the world! The Savior reigns;
let us our songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**No more let sins and sorrows grow,
and thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness,
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.**

THE DISMISSAL

The people respond, Thanks be to God.

THE VOLUNTARY My spirit be joyful *from* Cantata 146

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

The closing voluntary is a part of worship, extending the beauty of holiness so that the congregation can remember and give thanks for God's Word as it has been experienced this day. All are invited to say Amen at the end of the Voluntary as a conclusion to our worship.

**Vestry members are on hand today to welcome you to St. John's.
This morning's greeter is Heather Simson.**

**All are invited to Hubbard Hall after the pageant for cake to celebrate Jesus's birthday
and the hard work of pageant participants and planners.**

In your prayers this week, please pray for:

Peace in our world, for those serving our country in armed services, and for all victims of war and violence.

The parish of Santa Cruz del Norte, our companion parish in Cuba, and Saint Sauveur, Les Cayes, Haiti.

Séinaire de Théologie d'Église Épiscopale d'Haïti (STEEH), the Episcopal Seminary in Haiti.

Residents of the Caleb Hitchcock Center at Duncaster; the George Beach Apartments, Allen Place, Hartford; and the Hughes Convalescent Home.

Our postulants, Stacey Kohl and Michael Corey, and our missionary in Haiti, Dr. Lucinda Mosher.

All those whose hurts, burdens and fears are unspoken or unknown.

Those in need of healing:

Jim Evans	Jim Tracy	Jeanette Stanley	Kathy	Chas
Kim Green	Andrew Lee	Mary Karolewsky	Jay	Nancy
Carol Grieco	Paul Dewey	Tony Dipiano	Charlie	
Janet Ray	Will Eakins	Susan		

Those who are celebrating birthdays this week:

Wendy Lincoln	Kent Byrd	Paul Shaker	Winston Booker
Sherwood Willard	Alex Vance	Marshall Cook	

The Anglican Cycle of Prayer:

Pray for the Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh (Armagh, Ireland) and the Rt. Rev. Ferran Glenfield

In our Diocesan Cycle of Prayer:

Pray for Calvary St. George's, Bridgeport; St. Luke/St. Paul, Bridgeport; St. John's, Bridgeport; for the ministry of the Midnight Runs, and for soup kitchens and food pantries in parishes and as parish partners.

PAGEANT CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

ACOLYTES AND NARRATORS:

Elsa Ciscel, Cate Emerick, Catie Gillespie, Gus Murchie, Sophie Murchie, Claire O'Brien, John O'Brien, Stella Spletstoesser, Olivia Tummescheit

MARY:

Emma Evica

ANGEL GABRIEL:

Margaret Babbitt

JOSEPH:

Teddy Babbitt

DONKEY:

Alice Murchie

INNKEEPER 1:

Dawson Biondi

INNKEEPER 2:

Francis Lamlein

WIFE OF INNKEEPER:

Claire Brouillard

SHEPHERDS:

Dorian Ciscel, Callan Farrell, Jake Farrell, Kiley Murphy, Josh Murphy, Wolfie Parsons, Caroline Smith, Maisie Smith, Caleb Worrell, Ethen Worrell

SHEEP AND FRIENDLY ANIMALS:

Stokes Bass, Abigail Brunjes, Benjamin Clapp, Daphne Donofrio, Frances Eikel, Virginia Eikel, Trilli Parsons, Clara Tummescheit, Jacob Tummescheit, Brielle Worrell

ANGEL OF THE LORD:

Margaret Babbitt

ANGELS:

Morgan Babbitt, Emma Bass, Elise Biondi, Logan Burke, Sydney Burke; Dana Crocker, Genella Evans, Natalie Puzzo, Suzanne Santamaria, Abigail Thaxton, Caroline Thaxton, Olivia Thaxton

BABY JESUS:

Ezekiel Latif

KINGS:

Christine Babbitt, Britt Emerick and Daaé Ransom

CAMEL:

Bobbi Biondi and Michael Santamaria

CAMEL DRIVER:

Bradley Crocker

YOUTH CHOIR:

Christine Babbitt, Lead Girl; Ted Babbitt; Claire Brouillard; Naomi Cipriano; Elsa Ciscel; Britt Emerick, Asst. Head Chorister; Cate Emerick; Emma Evica; Katherine Foust, Deputy Lead Girl; Maria Foust; Francis Lamlein, Asst. to the Choirmaster; Rhaili-Em Lowe; Daaé Zen Ransom, Head Chorister; Olivia Tummescheit; Philip Tummescheit.

USHERS:

Wil Brunjes, Troy Gostyla, Gus Mahoney, Katie Mahoney

STAR:

Ford Gillespie

LIGHTING:

JP Evans; Eddie Genece

LIGHTING APPRENTICE:

Benjamin Puzzo

DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY:

Susan Murphy Thaxton

NARRATORS COACH:

David Beers

SHEPHERDS COACHES:

Jen Evans and Joan Murphy

SHEEP AND FRIENDLY ANIMALS WRANGLER:

Caty Dalton

PAGEANT DIRECTOR:

Mary Scripko

PAGEANT PRODUCER:

Janet Babbitt

TRUMPETERS:

Jeffrey Higgins and Thomas Hintz

FOR YOUR CALENDAR.

We are offering a **midweek Eucharist at 12:10 p.m. on Wednesdays in Advent**, with Bible study to follow. Bring a bag lunch if you wish; coffee will be provided. Please contact the Rev. Helen M. Moore at helen@sjparish.net if you have questions.

Get in the Christmas spirit! Come to St. John's to help with the "greening of the church" — decorating the church with poinsettias and other greenery on **Friday, December 23 from 10 a.m. to noon**. All are welcome to join in, even if only for a portion of the morning. We will share a casual potluck lunch when the work is done. If you plan to come and can bring sandwiches, salad, dessert, or beverages to share, please let Ellen in the office know.

During Epiphany, the **Sunday morning adult Faith Forums on January 8, 15, and 22** will be a discussion of the book *People of the Way: Renewing Episcopal Identity* by Dwight J. Zscheile. The publisher's description of the book is as follows:

There is a renewed conversation about identity and mission in American Anglicanism today, based on the recognition that the church's context in the U.S. has dramatically changed. The legacies of establishment, benefactor approaches to mission, and the national church ideal are no longer adequate for the challenges and opportunities facing the 21st century church. But if the Episcopal Church is no longer the Church of the Establishment and the benefactor model of church is dead, what is the heart of Episcopal mission and identity? Scholar and Episcopal priest Dwight Zscheile draws on multiple streams of Anglican thought and practice, plus contemporary experience to craft a vision for mission that addresses the church's post-establishment, post-colonial context. With stories, practices and concrete illustrations, Zscheile engages readers in re-envisioning what it means to be Anglican in America today and sends readers out to build new relationships within their local contexts.

All are invited to be part of this discussion on our call and mission as Episcopalians. Paperback copies of the book are \$17 on Amazon, and the Kindle version is \$9.99. If you plan to come to one or more book discussion sessions, you may purchase the book on your own OR let Ellen in the parish office know by **Tuesday, December 20** if you'd like us to order one on your behalf; we ask that you reimburse the \$17 cost (cash or check) when you pick the book up from the office or at the first Faith Forum session on January 8. E-mail Ellen at ellen@sjparish.net or call her at 860-523-5201.

Men's Bible Study is held every Thursday at 6:30 a.m. in the Reception Room. We sometimes skip the hard words but always get the gist. Join us!

Women Together! Women from St. John's, St. James's, and Trinity Episcopal Churches are invited to gather for an Epiphany-themed Bible study led by the Rev. Helen M. Moore. Over the course of four meetings, we will explore Scripture, cultivate friendships and reflect on our spiritual journeys. **The group will meet every other Tuesday in Epiphany (January 10, January 24, February 7, and February 21) from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. at St. John's.** If you plan to attend or have questions, contact the Rev. Helen M. Moore at 860-331-1127 or helen@sjparish.net, Linda MacGougan at 860-561-1588, or Emily Estes at 860-966-5466.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY, GIVING AND CONNECTION

We are accepting **memorial offerings toward Christmas poinsettias** to decorate the altar for the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services. Flower offering envelopes are available in the pews for you to pick up. If you'd like to contribute toward Christmas poinsettias in memory of a loved one, you may use this special envelope to send your donation to the office or put it in the offering plate, including the name(s) of those in whose memory/honor you are donating. You may also just mail in your Christmas flower donation check, with a note including the names to be included on the flower memorial list and "Christmas flowers" in the memo line. Memorial donations and names must be received in the office by **Wednesday, December 21** to ensure that your loved ones' names are included in Christmas bulletins. Thank you!

The Nominating Committee is preparing a slate of names for a new class of Vestry members to serve from February 2017 through January 2020. The Vestry meets monthly and takes on a variety of other responsibilities to provide oversight and guidance to the parish and the rector. Vestry and officer elections will take place at the Annual Meeting on January 29, 2017. If you would like to learn more about what it means to serve on the Vestry, be considered for an open position, or recommend another parishioner for the Vestry, please talk to a member of the Nominating Committee (David Beers, Eleanor Barnes, Lynn Brooks, and Marki Ware) or the rector.

Donate items for Blessing Bags! St. John's puts together "blessing bags" for people staying in shelters or otherwise in need during cold weather. We need warm socks, gloves, and hats for both men and women; multi-packs of disposable hand warmers; non-perishable snacks (such as granola bars or cracker packs); and gift cards to Subway, Dunkin Donuts or McDonald's in small denominations only (\$5 to \$10). Items will be collected throughout the Christmas season. See the poster in Hubbard Hall with cards that you can take to remind you to pick up a particular item.

Help us stock the bird feeders in the Cloister Garden this winter. We're looking for quality bird seed, such as black oil sunflower seeds or Nyger seed (commonly called "thistle"), which help attract the greatest variety of songbirds. Seed can be dropped off inside the parish office entrance any time.

DID YOU KNOW?

St. John's rector, the Rev. Susan Pinkerton, was featured in an article in the 2016 annual CRUX magazine published by the Diocese of Connecticut. Titled *A Slice of Life: Building and experiencing community*, the article focused on Susan's and St. John's efforts to foster connections in our neighborhood. The magazine is available online at <https://www.episcopalct.org/ecct-news/crux-magazine/>.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER!

- ❖ Deadline for Christmas flower memorial donations — December 21
- ❖ "Greening of the Church" and Potluck Lunch — December 23, 10 a.m. to noon
- ❖ Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist — December 24 at 4:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. (10:30 p.m. choral prelude)
- ❖ Christmas Day Holy Eucharist — December 25 at 10:00 a.m.
- ❖ *People of the Way* Book Discussion at Faith Forums January 8, 15, and 22, 9:30 a.m.
- ❖ St. John's Annual Meeting — January 29
- ❖ Women Together Epiphany Spirituality Group January 10 and 24, February 7 and 21, 3 to 4 p.m.

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. each Sunday morning

5:00 p.m. Evensong on selected last Sundays of the month

5:30 p.m. Evening Prayer each Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Christian Education at 9:30 a.m. September – May

STAFF

The Rev. Susan Pinkerton (susan@sjparish.net)	.....	Rector
Scott Lamlein (scott@sjparish.net)	.....	Director of Music
The Rev. Walter McKenney* (walter@sjparish.net)	.....	Deacon
The Rev. Hope Eakins* (hope@sjparish.net)	.....	Priest Associate
The Rev. William Eakins* (bill@sjparish.net)	.....	Priest Associate
The Rev. Helen M. Moore* (helen@sjparish.net)	.....	Director of Pastoral and Spiritual Ministries
Janet Babbitt (janet@sjparish.net)	.....	Director of Religious Education
Mirella Russo (mirella@sjparish.net)	.....	Financial Administrator
Ellen Painter Dollar (ellen@sjparish.net)	.....	Parish Manager and Assistant to the Rector
Dwight Latif (dwight@sjparish.net)	.....	Sexton
Mary Scripko (mary@sjparish.net)	.....	Religious Education Assistant
Ralph Valentine	.....	Organist and Choirmaster Emeritus

**These positions are non-stipendiary. These clergy give generously of their time and expertise to support St. John's mission and ministries.*

VESTRY

Jeff Verney	.....	Warden
Buffy Ineson	.....	Warden
Beth Grieco and Chris Byrd	.....	Co-Treasurers
Ellen Painter Dollar	.....	Clerk

2014-16: Eleanor Barnes, Lynn Brooks, David Beers, Marki Ware

2015-17: Courtney Bass, Jan Hickcox, Heather Simson, Wes Winterbottom

2016-18: Mike Corey, Tim Goetz, Ginny Kemp, Will Smith

SAINT PAUL'S DEAF CONGREGATION

Sundays, 10:30 a.m., in the church

Lay leaders: Victoria Crosta – text: 860-478-6524; Melissa Render – text: 860-983-4606