



## “The Future is Menaced by Small Minds”

Welcome to the month of December, the month perhaps more imbued with emotions and expectations than any other in our culture. This is the month for Advent and Christmas and all of the small celebrations and gatherings that fill our calendars. In the midst of all this festive activity, many of us will continue to hear or watch the news that is filled with horrible stories of suffering and death. And we may wonder, how can we continue to sing that ancient song of Christmas, as expressed by our venerable Maine poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “of peace on earth, good will to men”?

The remarkable miracle of Christmas is that the Messiah is born for all the earth and all humanity. In the Incarnation, God enters time and space and changes the trajectory of history without overriding human freedom. In the Messiah, each person is offered grace that can transform their thinking and their lives.

Frank Laubach was a twentieth century American missionary to the Philippines who labored in the field of literacy. In his small book called *Prayer*, published in 1946, he argued that “the future is menaced by small minds.” Mr. Laubach went on to say, “The most acute need of our age is for global-minded people who ‘think the world thought, do the world deed, and pray the world prayer’ .... Nothing has brought our world to the brink of hell but warped, prejudiced, greedy little thoughts.”

His insights are profound. Each act of violence, and every war, is initiated by small minds operating in an US versus THEM framework built on previous actions recorded in history. These little thoughts do not serve humanity well, and they are entirely inconsistent with what God has brought into being through the Incarnate One. The new Way opened for us in the person of Jesus is an invitation to join the Beloved Community that loves the enemy precisely because they are an enemy! This one new humanity welcomes people from every language, nation and tribe, without concern for the fictional lines that humans draw between various groups based on subjective criteria.

My friends, as you contemplate the miracle of Christmas in these days, please think the world thought, do the world deed, and pray the world prayer. There is only one planet Earth, our one fragile home in this vast and unforgiving universe. Do not allow your thinking to be trapped by petty and small concerns. Be global-minded people who always consider what is best for all people and all the planet. By doing this, you can in fact carry the meaning of Christmas forward and move us perhaps one inch closer to that peaceable kingdom of the Prince of Peace.

*Nathan W. Ferrell +*



*The Rev. Nathan W. Ferrell*

## Advent Lessons & Carols: Sunday 10 December



We look forward to our annual entrance into Advent with the Lessons and Carols Service. This year it will be on the second Sunday of Advent. This ancient liturgy is like a bath in the scriptural story of salvation history, interspersed with beloved canticles and songs. There will be no Communion this day, and we will celebrate Lessons and Carols at both 8 and 10:15 AM.



# *Advent and Christmas 2023 at Saint Mary's*



## *Saturday 02 December*

**9 - 1 SPARKLES FAIR** with Home Goods, Treasure Trove & Vintage Boutique  
plus Cookie Walk, Bake Sale and the Cafe

## *Sunday 03 December: Advent 1*

**8** Quiet Eucharist  
**9:15** Formation Hour  
**10:15** Choral Eucharist

## *Sunday 10 December: Advent 2*

**8** Advent Lessons & Carols  
**9:15** Formation Hour  
**10:15** Advent Lessons & Carols

## *Friday 15 December*

**7:30 PM** Saint Mary Schola Concert with 7pm pre-concert lecture  
(plus Saturday 16 December at 3 pm at St. Luke's)

## *Saturday 16 December*

**9 - 12 noon** Advent Quiet Morning in the Fr. James Chapel

## *Sunday 17 December: Advent 3*

**8** Quiet Eucharist  
**9:15** Formation Hour  
**10:15** Choral Eucharist  
**11:30** Pageant Rehearsal

## *Thursday 21 December*

**12 noon** Blue Christmas Eucharist in the Fr. James Chapel

## *Sunday 24 December: Advent 4*

**10:15** Christmas Pageant and Holy Eucharist

## *Sunday 24 December: Christmas Eve*

**4 PM** Family Christmas Lessons and Carols  
A one-hour service designed for families and young people

**9 PM** Choral Candlelight Christmas Eve Eucharist  
Beginning and ending in candlelight with magnificent music from the Choir

## *Monday 25 December: Christmas Day*

**10:15** Joyful Christmas Morning Eucharist

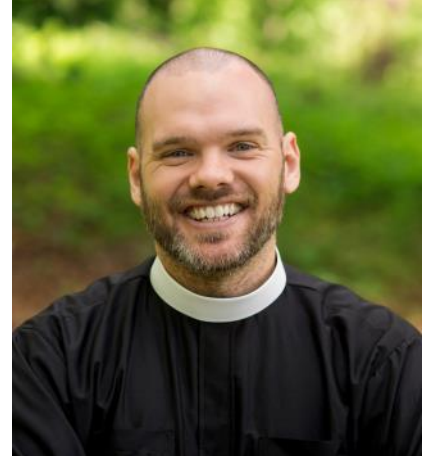


# John the Baptist: The Awkward Advent Prophet

by Deacon Matthew Simpson

I love John the Baptist; I'm a fan. This eccentric locust-eating wild man of the Judean countryside flies in the face of our modern Holiday Season. But I think because his personality is such an affront to our modern sensibilities we can sometimes overlook how profound, and dare I say, *moderate* this Prophet really is. First, let's look at why I argue John the Baptist is quite sensible and moderate. In Luke's Gospel account, we read some the teachings of John on what is required for true repentance to God:

***“And the crowds asked him, ‘What then should we do?’ In reply he said to them, ‘Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.’ Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, ‘Teacher, what should we do?’ He said to them, ‘Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.’ Soldiers also asked him, ‘And we, what should we do?’ He said to them, ‘Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.’ -Luke 3:10-14***



In other words, don't lie, cheat, or steal, and if you have an abundance, give generously. This is quite sensible and moderate when we compare it to Jesus' teachings on selling all your possessions and giving the money to the poor. Hence, I think that while John is an eccentric, his teachings are actually not that difficult to swallow and digest.

Second, I want to focus on the gift of his eccentricities as wisdom during this Advent Season. John lives in the wilderness, away from the cosmopolitan centers of society. He makes his clothes and food from the land, not from the marketplace. He cares nothing for wealth, status, or how others perceive him: His one duty is faithfulness to God. John is ***“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord,’”*** but how does he do this? John rejects the vanities of this world; he proclaims good news to the poor; and he speaks truth to power and to the comfortable. By letting go of the vanities of this world, John creates space for God to come into the lives around him.

During Advent, the outside world is going to ramp up the calls for us to consume, to party, to spend money to fix any unhappiness in our lives or the lives of our loved ones. During Advent, the outside world will try to prey on any insecurity or fear we have so that we may buy the next new product that will make us feel beautiful or safe. During Advent, the outside world through social media will continue to be a source of division, malice, and cruelty. There will be a lot of noise this season; there will be a lot of vanity.

What is the wisdom from our Awkward Advent Prophet? Prepare our hearts for the Lord; make space for Jesus. Let go of the vanities of the world; take time to separate ourselves from the false promises that consumption, beauty, wealth or fame will lead to happiness. Also remember: don't lie, cheat, or steal, and if you have an abundance, give generously. If we do these things, we shall be blessed...and maybe - just maybe - come to welcome hearing of John the Baptist during Advent.

## Advent Quiet Morning: Saturday 16 December Getting Directions to the Kingdom of Heaven

Before starting out on a trip to somewhere new, you have to get directions, right? Do I go north, south, east or west? Take a car, train, ship? Book a flight? How long will it take? Is this a group endeavor, or should I go on my own? What shall I pack? Most importantly, will it be worth the trouble? Maybe I should just stay home?

At our Quiet Morning, we'll contemplate this central image of our faith. Jesus speaks frequently about the “kingdom of heaven” and tells several parables about it. References to it are sprinkled throughout the Bible. And perhaps you've had your own experiences of the Kingdom. Maybe you have a favorite poem on the subject (bring it with you) or piece of music that transports you there (play it for us). We'll cover as much territory as we can in a journey of about three hours.

9:00 meet in departure lounge (Father James Chapel) for music, artwork and introductions

9:30 -12:30 adventures on the way to the Kingdom of Heaven

12:30 leave-taking



# Music Ministry

by James Kennerley

## Sacred music series part 2: Advent & Christmas

I heard the bells on Christmas Day  
Their old, familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet  
The words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's oft-quoted 1863 poem, *Christmas Bells*, sums up in many ways the epitome of sacred music at this time of year. The carols tend to be "familiar," "old," and "sweet." Like Charles Dicken's *A Christmas Carol*, the poem speaks very much to our current celebration of Christmas replete with a vast array of apparently ancient traditions and customs. But it was not always so. Until the middle of the twentieth century, the majority of Anglican Communion traditions celebrated their principal Christmas service on Christmas morning. It was not until the popularization of the so-called "Midnight Mass" by the Roman Catholics in the 1950s that a celebration on the eve became the more popular of the two services.

Despite the constant extraneous sights and sounds of Christmas during the month of November (and sometimes even October!), Christmas does not officially begin in the Church until midnight on December 25; (it continues until the Twelfth Night, January 6, and, in some traditions, continues until February 2, the Feast of the Candlemas). Before that we experience the penitential season of Advent. Liturgically, the colors of the vestments are changed from the "ordinary time" colors of green or white. The Advent wreath, with its four candles representing the four Sundays of Advent, is lit. The *Gloria in excelsis* (Glory to God on high) is replaced with a less celebratory Song of Praise, and we focus in on the creation of the world, the Holy Family, and the Old Testament prophets proclaiming the birth of the Savior. Here are some lesser-known facts about Advent and Christmas traditions that we will enjoy over the course of the following four weeks.

### Christmas Carol

The word "carol" comes from the Old French word, "carole" meaning a secular circle dance accompanied by singers. The form flourished during the Early Middle Ages. While carols may have been sung as devotional offerings in association with Feast days (not necessarily just Christmas), they were not offered as part of any liturgy, which had texts prescribed (in Latin) that were specific to the readings and themes

of the particular day. Following the Reformation the incorporation of folk and folk-like words and music into the services proved a popular move, and the tradition developed considerably during and since the nineteenth century. The word is now virtually synonymous with Christmas religious celebrations.



James Kennerley,  
Music Minister

### Lessons & Carols

Far from being an ancient tradition, the traditional service of nine lessons and carols, famously broadcast from the chapel of Kings College in the University of Cambridge, began life in 1880. At this time, Christmas carols were sung by choirs who would go from doorstep to doorstep, (a practice replicated in a great many Christmas movies). The Dean of Truro cathedral in Cornwall invented the format of nine lessons, and nine carols for choir complemented them, to which were added carols for the whole congregation to sing. The format has remained pretty much as it was first conceived. It has proved immensely popular. King's College continues to broadcast the service live on radio, as it has done since 1928.

### Hark! the Herald?

What if I told you that one of the most famous and iconic Christmas carols started life with a different name AND a different tune? Well, that is the case with "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing." The original text, penned by Charles Wesley in 1739, was "Hark, how all the welkin rings / 'Glory to the King of Kings.'" ("Welkin" is Old Saxon for Heaven.) Furthermore, the tune that Wesley originally used was that sung to "Jesus Christ is risen today" (207 in *The Hymnal*). Try singing the first few lines to that melody! The familiar version of the words was set in 1753 when Wesley's text was published in George Whitefield's *Hymns for Social Worship*. The now-familiar melody was adapted from an existing piece by Felix Mendelssohn (apparently to the composer's chagrin). Since its publication in that form in 1857, the text and tune have become inseparable.

So, there we have it. Behind the apparently ageless musical and liturgical traditions of the Advent and Christmas season lie a great many surprises, diversions, and new creations. In any case, I cannot wait to celebrate this most magical of seasons at Saint Mary's.

James

# SPARKLES 2022

Saturday,  
December 2

9 AM - 1 PM

It's almost here!  
Sparkles Renewed!

Join us!



Bring your family and friends to enjoy everything the fair has to offer. Loads of Christmas Décor, Household gifts,, linens and knitted goods galore, beautiful jewelry, and more. Stock up at the Cookie Walk and Bake Shop, then stop in our expanded Café for stew, soup, hotdogs, grilled cheese, and other goodies. Just what you need after shopping the fair!

The Sparkles Christmas Fair has been a highly anticipated event in our community for many years. Let's make 2023 a year to remember.

**Join in to help with our biggest fundraiser and friend-raiser!**

Questions? Call or email Mary Sullivan [mlsull2nc@gmail.com](mailto:mlsull2nc@gmail.com)

## Blue Christmas Eucharist

**Thursday 21 December  
at 12 noon**

*in the Fr James Chapel*

*A quiet, reflective gathering for those who are grieving, sad, lonely, not feeling particularly festive, or just in need of quiet reflection in the busy-ness of the season.*

*All are welcome, no explanations needed.*



# SUNDAY FORMATION - 9:15 - 10

FORMATION

SUNDAY

Our Sunday Formation is a method for all to grow together as we build “**authentic, vibrant, Christ-centered community**” in this place. Everyone is invited to gather at 9:15 for any group: a prayerful group in the Chapel, a discussion group in the Auditorium, and youth activities in lower level Guiding RAY area.

## → Guiding RAY for Youth

Lessons, crafts, and fun every Sunday following the lectionary and church calendar, before classes begin. Volunteers needed!

## → Be Still in the Chapel

Everyone is invited to gather for times of silence, for contemplation of poetry and spiritual writings, and for shared response. The only thing needed is an open heart and a beginner’s mind. See p.15 for a sample of reflective selections.

## → Coffee & Conversation in the Auditorium

At 9:15, grab a cup of coffee and a bite of food, then join Fr Nathan and Deacon Matthew in informal and informational discussions on what’s happening around us. Here are the topics this month:

**December 3: Restoration Laos** – Come and learn about this inspirational ministry bringing hope to the people of Laos. We will hear a presentation by the Rev. Michael Ambler and discuss ways that Saint Mary’s can support this effort.

**December 10: Thomas Merton** – Merton died on 10 December 1968 in Bangkok, Thailand. Who was he, and why is he still famous in some Christian circles?

**December 17: The Four Gospel Canticles** – There are four “songs” in the Gospel of Luke which are interwoven with the story of birth of Jesus. What are they, and how do these provide a framework for the daily prayers of a Christian?

**December 24:** No Community Conversation today, only preparations for the Christmas Pageant!

**December 31:** No Community Conversation today, but a chance to catch up over coffee.

## Nominating Committee

Each year, the Nominating Committee is composed of the retiring Vestry members and sometimes a one parishioners-at-large. This year we were pleased to have Tom LaPlante serving as chair of the committee; he was joined by Pat Peard and Rudy Israel. Each parishioner suggested for nomination has been contacted to determine his/her willingness and availability to serve. After much prayerful discussion, work, and weeks of deliberation, the committee is pleased to announce the following slate of nominees for election at the 2024 Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 28. We are most grateful to those others willing to serve as well!

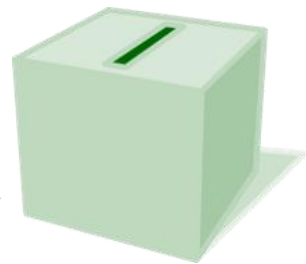
Sr. Warden: Steve Conley

Jr. Warden: Tom LaPlante

Vestry (3-year terms): Melissa Kane, Valerie Kyros and Pat Peard

2024 Diocesan Convention Delegates: Bonny Rodden, Mary Ann McLean, Lynne Shepherd, and Nadine Timberlake with Fred Webber as an alternate.

Brief biographical information on the Vestry nominees will be shown in the January AVE.



## Outreach Ministry - All Ages Serving Near and Far

### Last Sunday Offering Saint Mary's Monthly **MISSION FOCUS**



Our December  
Focus is:



**Maine**  
Community Foundation

### Saint Mary's to Support Lewiston-Auburn Response Fund this Christmas

Every year the loose cash offering at the Christmas Services goes to a particular mission or ministry. Due to the recent tragic events in Lewiston, the Outreach Committee has decided to make Maine Community Foundation's Lewiston-Auburn Response Fund the recipient of this year's loose cash offering. The donation will be given to both focuses of the Response Fund:

- Direct support to the victims and families directly impacted by the mass shooting.
- Direct donations to the broader recovery effort which "will support nonprofit organizations addressing current and emerging needs and helping with the recovery process associated with the shootings."

Maine Community Foundation has a reliable 40-year history of investing in Maine communities by providing access to programming, grants and scholarships around the entire state. They work in areas supporting local entrepreneurs, racial equality, education equity, and bringing Mainers together today for a better Maine tomorrow. Your loose cash offering collected at all FOUR Christmas liturgies (on DEC 24 & 25) will have a direct impact on healing the wounds of violence here in Maine. More information about Maine Community Foundation can be found at: [www.mainecef.org](http://www.mainecef.org). Thank you in advance for your generosity!

## Falmouth Food Pantry

The Falmouth Food Pantry serves close to 200 families a month and needs donations from individuals. Our donation box is in the middle closet of the Parish House and in the Narthex. Helpful foods are soup in cans (but not cream soups), boxes of pasta, cold cereal, canned tuna fish, canned chicken, and granola bars. If you have any questions supporting the Pantry, feel free to reach out to Vanessa, [recordvanessa@gmail.com](mailto:recordvanessa@gmail.com).



## Helping Hands at Home

If you are in need of indoor or outdoor odd-job help at your home, please reach out. The 'Helping Hands at Home' ministry will try to assist! Contact Beth Shaw, [admin@smary.org](mailto:admin@smary.org) or Jennifer Gregg, [jenniferanngregg@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferanngregg@gmail.com)



## Outreach Ministry - All Ages Serving Near and Far



**St. Elizabeth's**  
— Essentials Pantry —

### The annual “Winter Coat Drive” is here! The full icy blast of the winter weather is coming soon. **2023 Winter Coat, Boot & Hat Drive**

In mid November, St. E’s handed out 289 coats, Vests & fleeces. Amazing!

**We are looking for:**

- ◆ **Men’s and Women’s coats that are clean and in good condition; ADULT sizes (all sizes welcome, but especially large and extra-large);**
- ◆ **winter-weight socks (not light-weight dress socks)**
- ◆ **ADULT sized, warm winter gloves: leather or fabric;**
- ◆ **warm blankets and quilts that are clean and in good condition; identify size;**
- ◆ **KNITTERS ALERT: we would love to share any winter gloves, mittens, scarves, socks, and hats you might have available to share.**

Of course, contributions of kitchen wares (pots, pans, plates, cups, etc.) and house wares (matching sets of sheets, blankets, towels, etc.) will continue to be received to supplement the weekly distribution of toilet paper, laundry soap, bath soap, and feminine hygiene products. These items can come from house or camp cleaning, unsold items from yard sales or estate sales, down-sizing, clearing out to move to a new home, etc.

There are several other ways you can help. In addition to volunteering your time and/or helping to keep our collection box full with needed items, critically-needed monetary donations can be made by mailing a check to: St. Elizabeth’s Jubilee Center, PO Box 4036, Portland, ME 04101 or by making a payment online - see [www.stelizabethsmaine.org/give](http://www.stelizabethsmaine.org/give). Our Amazon Wish List is at this link, too. Your generosity gives hope and love to neighbors who are facing hard times!

**For more information, please contact Stan Eaton at [stan.eaton@gmail.com](mailto:stan.eaton@gmail.com).**



## Saint Mary’s Advent Angel Giving Tree

Here is an opportunity to become engaged in the spirit of giving this December. Saint Mary’s, together with the Salvation Army and Woodford’s Family Services, is hosting an Advent Angel Giving Tree.

Angel tags will be on the tree in the Auditorium Foyer with a child’s gift request. Please take a tag, purchase item(s) on the tag, and bring it back to the tree unwrapped with the tag attached.

To ensure the families receive them in time for Christmas, the *unwrapped* gifts with the Angel tag should be out back under the tree no later than December 15.

For more information, contact Maureen Hale at [mhalemaine@gmail.com](mailto:mhalemaine@gmail.com) or [650-9073](tel:650-9073).





## Outreach Ministry - All Ages Serving Near and Far

### YOUTH SERVICE CORPS: DECEMBER Gathering on 12/17

All those in Middle School and High School are invited to gather for service work with neighbors in need. This gathering brings together young people from around the Portland area.

*What a great way to gather Community Service hours!*

Look in the eNEWS for more information on the great event we will be doing on the third Sunday of December. Plans are in the making!!

This work is being done in cooperation with the Outreach Program ([Home - The Outreach Program](#)). Text Fr Peter Swarr to register and FMI: 413-388-8387



**American  
Red Cross**

*Together, we can save a life*

## Critical Need Blood Donations Thursday 28 December, 9 - 2 In Saint Mary's Auditorium

There is a critical need for blood! It is safe for all healthy people to give blood. Sign-up today to be a blood donor and give to those who need your blood to survive!

Go to [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) to make your donor appointment. Location code: StMary

**PLEASE donate, if you can. The need is great.**

## Souper Supper: 2nd & 4th Fridays

Soup, salad, bread and a sweet treat. 5 - 7 PM. ALL are welcome!

December Soups: Dec 8: *Chicken and white bean chili*

Dec 22: *Tomato basil soup*

Enjoy this free, sit-down dinner and this community-wide fellowship meal in a relaxed atmosphere.

You will be feted with a homemade soup, salad, rolls, dessert and beverage.

Wonderful for singles and families alike. Gather in the Auditorium.

No reservations required. Just bring your family and friends and enjoy!



### Support Souper Supper! Buy Coffee By Design coffee!

Medium to robust coffees: *Casco Bay and Rebel Blend*

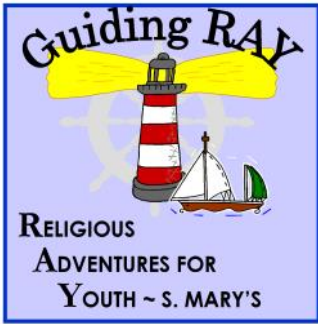
Coffee By Design 12 oz. bags of ground fair-traded, organic, delicious coffees are on sale at Saint Mary's for **35% less than suggested retail!**

**Regular is \$11; Decaf is \$12**

Plus you can support fair trade practices ...and a locally-owned business... and get GREAT organic coffee! Win! Win! Win!



# Youth Christian Formation



**Guiding RAY is a fun, fellowship-oriented time on Sunday mornings for kids through the age of 13. During the program year (Sept. - mid June), we offer our children an opportunity to learn Bible stories and to develop their relationship with God. Our hope is to guide them to the safe harbor of God's everlasting love where they can grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you feel led to do so, we need volunteers in Guiding RAY for the fall! The commitment is low, and the reward is high.**



**Meg Hurdman,  
Saint Mary's Family Minister**

'Tis the Season, and we are making plans for Advent and Christmas. A group of parishioners worked on Advent wreaths during both coffee hours on the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped.

We will be teaching with music in December. Miss Mel (Melissa Roland) is dusting off the hand bells, and we are hoping to have a children's bell choir participate in one of the services at the end of December. During class time, we will review the Christmas story and use songs and bells during class time. If you are musical and can help on Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup>, let Meg know.

Our new pageant director, Emily Rodgers, is working with our music minister, James Kennerley, and Father Nathan on a script for the morning service on Christmas Eve.

The Christmas story is told in only two of the four Gospels. The pageant script is a compilation of details from both Matthew and Luke. From these gospels we learn different bits of information that help us see Jesus was born during a tumultuous time. Both gospels open with a description of an engaged couple (Mary and Joseph). Both identify Joseph as descended from the line of King David and have Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit. The overlap notes the Holy Family lived in Nazareth, but Jesus was born in Bethlehem. That is where the similarities end.

Matthew's gospel records that the visit of the Magi (kings or wise men) from the East, probably Persia (Iran) who are not mentioned in Luke. Luke tells the story of the shepherds, who are missing from Matthew. Luke mentions a Roman census but does not record the slaughter of infants or the resulting flight of Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus to Egypt.

The timeline is vague, but the events are dramatic. They include an empire-wide census, a miraculous conception and birth, a very bright star, several kings, a massacre, an escape, and eventual return. Matthew and Luke both reported the events they each believed to be the most significant to frame Jesus as the promised messiah and a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy.

It all comes to you on Sunday, December 24 at 10:15 AM.

## December Guiding RAY Schedule

### **December Guiding RAY Schedule – Class time at 10:00 am - *The Christmas Story: A New Covenant***

- Dec. 3 Rotation #4 First Sunday of Advent and 11:30 Pageant practice
- Dec. 10 Rotation #4 Second Sunday of Advent and 11:30 Pageant practice
- Dec. 17 Rotation #4 Third Sunday of Advent and 11:30 DRESS REHEARSAL
- Dec. 24 Fourth Sunday of Advent - 10:15 **Christmas Pageant (No Guiding RAY classes – All children in church, but the Nursery will be OPEN)**
- Dec 31 Lessons & Carols for New Year's Eve – 10:15 **(No Guiding RAY classes – Older children welcome in church - Nursery OPEN)**



# Christmas Pageant Schedule

The Pageant Director for 2023 is Emily Rodgers.

Sunday 3 December – First Sunday in Advent - Pageant Parts Assigned

Sunday 10 December – Second Sunday in Advent - Costume Fitting

Sunday 17 December at 11:30 am – Pageant Dress Rehearsal in Church Building

Entire cast should meet in the Guiding RAY space. All participants need to be at the dress rehearsal.

Sunday 17 December – Third Sunday in Advent –  
Bell Choir and Practice Christmas Songs

Sunday 24 December at 10:15 am - Fourth Sunday in Advent/Christmas Pageant

Entire cast should meet in the Guiding RAY space promptly at 9:15 in costume and ready to perform! (No Guiding RAY classes – All children in church.)

Important Pageant Contacts:

Director: Emily Rodgers 207-233-3578  
emilymayrogers@gmail.com

Music Director: James Kennerley 203-570-0837 james@smary.org

Guiding RAY #2: Melissa Roland 904-333-1520; mmroland@comcast.net



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## **safeTALK Workshop: Saturday 13 January, 2–6 PM**

**BECOME SUICIDE-ALERT**



**safeTALK**

*suicide alertness for everyone*

This is the new schedule for the workshop that was postponed in November. All are invited to sign up for this 4-hour training in suicide alertness and prevention. This is designed for the average person and is applicable to every person.

safeTALK is a program from LivingWorks which is a global leader in training resources for suicide prevention and response. FMI, visit their website ( [Home - LivingWorks](#) ).

Register by January 10 by emailing Fr Nathan at [nathanferrell@smary.org](mailto:nathanferrell@smary.org). There is a fee of \$30 which covers the cost of materials you will receive.

If you or anyone you know experiences thoughts of suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 9-8-8. And make sure this number is always in your contacts!

# Vestry Highlights from the Wardens

by Janet Bowne

The Vestry met on November 15.

Peter provided a financial overview and reported our revenue is currently 15% above our 2023 budget. Attendance at our Sunday services has increased over recent months and loose offerings have exceeded our budgeted amount. To balance our revenue, expenses have been higher than expected, due in large part to added expenses within our music program. We received a generous gift from the Galli family, and we discussed proposed upgrades to our kitchen including a new dishwasher, refrigerator, freezer, knife set and aprons. Building and grounds is doing



Janet Bowne, Sr. Warden



Steve Conley, Jr. Warden

some additional research and will report back to the executive committee. Peter and Garret B worked on and presented a draft budget for 2024. The Vestry acknowledged and voiced appreciation to both for their ongoing work on the budget.

Janet and Steve have done more investigation, and it appears that having the Sanctuary building designated as an historic building is not as restrictive as it first appeared. If we are approved to be considered an historic building, then we become eligible to apply for federal grants to help with the church restorations needed in 2024 and 2025. Vestry approved that we move ahead and begin the National Register Application Process.

Foundation 135: Preserving the Faith will be our campaign name for restoration work to be completed in 2025, which is 135 years after Saint Mary's was begun. Thornton Tomasetti have been hired as our structural engineers and Knowles Industrial will be the contractor for the work. Mapping has been completed using a drone, and digital plans are being finalized. Additional information will be presented to the Parish at the annual meeting on January 28.

Guiding Ray Day School: We continue to move forward with the Town of Falmouth and the State of Maine Dept of Health and Human Services to receive the needed approvals. The zoning for the neighborhood needs to be adjusted. Hopefully this will all be completed by May of 2024. Nathan feels strongly that this should be the mission component of the Foundation 135 campaign.

Patrick Murray provided a wonderful review of fees charged and received for the use of our Auditorium, other parish rooms, and the Sanctuary as well. The Vestry had a robust discussion regarding balancing our desire to remain open, welcoming, and available for the community, while being cognizant of the cost to maintain and heat the buildings. Since we had not increased any fees for 7 years, a slight increase to several of the rental fees was suggested.

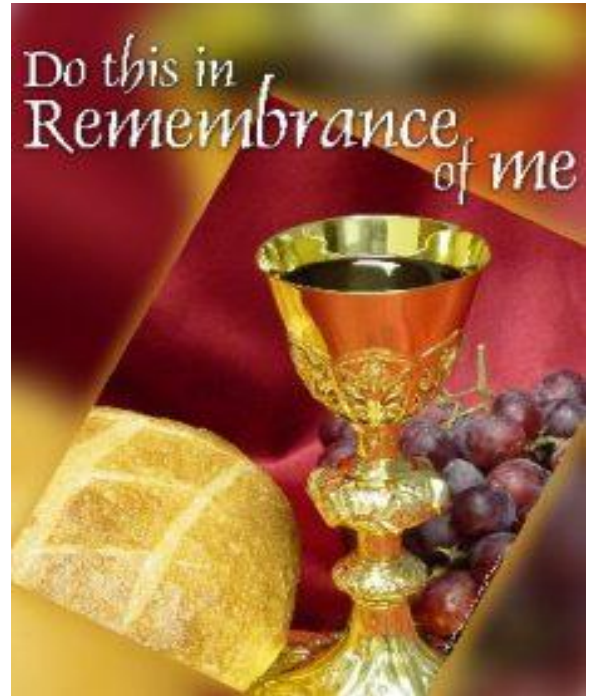
## 4 Steps to a Non-Anxious Life

1. Show up
2. Pay attention
3. Always be honest
4. Be open to any outcome

## **WANTED! Eucharistic Ministers and Lectors**

In the Church's tradition, everyone who gathers for worship has a role to play. No one is left out! But some roles require special training and preparation. Saint Mary's needs more laypersons to serve as Eucharistic Ministers (Chalice Bearers) and as Lectors (Scripture Readers). The training and preparation are minimal, but the personal and spiritual rewards are great! To clearly read the Word of God to the people of God, and to serve the Blood of Christ to the people of Christ, is to play a part in sharing the grace of God with hungry and thirsty souls. What a privilege!

At our 8:00 Eucharist, one person typically serves in both roles, while at 10:15 they are usually two separate persons. If the Holy Spirit may be tugging at your heart to offer this ministry occasionally at Saint Mary's, please be in touch with Fr Nathan or Deacon Matthew. We will plan either individual or group training, depending on the response.



### **Our Upcoming Sunday Lectionary**

**December 3: Isaiah 64.1-9 ; Psalm 80.1-7,16-18 ; Mark 13.24-27**

**December 10 (Lessons and Carols): Genesis 2.4-9,15-25 ; Genesis 3.1-15 ; Isaiah 11.1-9 ; Isaiah 40.1-11 ; Jeremiah 31.31-34 ; Baruch 4.36—5.9 ; Luke 1.26-38**

**December 17: Isaiah 61.1-4,8-11 ; Cantic 15 (Magnificat) ; John 1.6-8,19-28**

**December 24 (Christmas Eve): Titus 3.3-8 ; Psalm 97 ; Luke 2.8-20**

**December 31: Isaiah 61.10—62.3 ; Psalm 147 ; John 1.1-18**

### **WEEKLY SPIRITUAL RESOURCES**

*All worship videos remain available on Facebook.*

#### **PRAYER AND WORSHIP**

**NOONDAY PRAYER AT 12 MON - WED** in the Chapel and on [Facebook Live](#)

**HEALING EUCHARIST AT 12 ON THURS** in the Chapel and on [Facebook Live](#)

**SUNDAY EUCHARIST AT 10:15 AM** available on [Facebook Live](#)

#### **INTERACTIVE SPIRITUAL FORMATION**

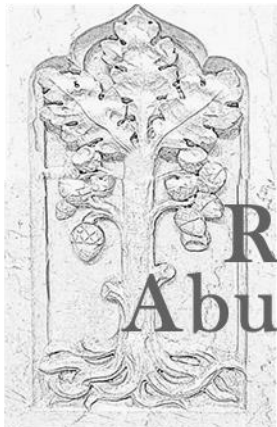
**BE STILL CENTERING PRAYER:** Mondays at 5 PM In the Chapel and [on ZOOM](#)

**BE STILL SUNDAY MORNING:** Sundays at 9:15 AM In the Chapel and [on ZOOM](#)

**WISDOM SEEKERS:** Tuesdays at 10:30 AM

**MERTON GROUP:** Thursdays at 3 PM [on ZOOM](#)

# 2024 Stewardship: Rooted in Abundance



## Rooted <sup>IN</sup> Abundance

*They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit. - Jeremiah 17:8*

Abundance is the opposite of scarcity. Saint Mary's has always been and continues to be a place of abundance and optimism: active and enriching ministries and mission programs, a range of formation programs, and healthy community connections and collaborations. This is all possible because of our compassionate and engaged parishioners. Your gifts of work, wisdom and wealth enable us to meet our mission to see Christ in all people. THANK YOU! As of the AVE deadline we have received 78 pledge intentions totaling \$183,470 toward our 2024 campaign goal of \$300,000. If you haven't made a pledge of financial support for 2024, please take a moment to complete a pledge form ([linked here.](#)) Return it, confidentially, to Beth Shaw, Parish Manager, ([admin@smary.org](mailto:admin@smary.org) or by mail to 43 Foreside Road, Falmouth).

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## "MANY HANDS..."

### **Saint Mary's Joins Forces With "Locations Real Estate, Falmouth"**

In a tag-team effort, St. Mary's "Helping Hands at Home" volunteers partnered with real estate agents from Locations Real Estate in Falmouth to ready the property of fellow parishioner Susan Chapman in time for Winter!

Locations Real Estate Group from the Falmouth office makes a point of helping Falmouth residents in need and chose Susan's property on the recommendation of St. Mary's parishioner Jessica LaPlante. Jessica and about a dozen of her Locations colleagues turned out on a bright morning in early November, leaving the property with nary a leaf in sight. Not surprisingly, Mother Nature was not finished, and a second round was needed, so a smaller group of St. Marians came back for "round two" on November 19th, filling another 40 leaf bags in record time!

A sincere "Thank You" to Locations in Falmouth and to St. Mary's Parishioners Tom LaPlante (and his super-duper leaf blower), Becky Pride, Tim and Matthew Grace, Jennifer Gregg, and Rayle and Ed Ainsworth, and Greg Fergin who helped finish the preparation for winter at the Chapman residence!



## Be Still.....and know that I am God.

BE STILL is a time between services for meditation, poetry, and especially for a community seeking the Divine. Our current theme is Creation, and as we move into Advent, our waiting and hoping is a wonderful way to listen and share. All are welcome anytime.

Join us from 9:15 to 10: 00 most Sundays in the Chapel (or on Zoom). For more information or to receive the Zoom link, contact Jennifer Gregg at [jenniferanngregg@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferanngregg@gmail.com)

### ONCE

the father  
of my son's friend  
watched his father die.  
Then for some reason  
came, still grieving,  
to a soccer field where I,  
a guy he knew,  
or kind of knew,  
stood with the others  
trying not to stare  
at the *there-*  
*but-for-the-grace-of God-*  
*go-I* of him:  
his eyes raw-rimmed  
behind dark glasses  
as herds of little bodies  
shrieked and galloped  
all around us—  
whoever he was before  
a trace, a remnant now,  
shaking in the gray October wind:  
the truth about love, about all of us,  
so plain in him  
there was nothing left  
but to pretend  
I was not watching  
out the corner of my eye  
when the muddy dog,  
and the bouncing ball,  
and the children  
chasing after it  
all seemed to veer  
and disappear inside him.  
~ Patrick Phillips

### Dew Light

Now in the blessed days of more and less  
when the news about time is that each day  
there is less of it I know none of that  
as I walk out through the early garden  
only the day and I are here with no  
before or after and the dew looks up  
without a number or a present age  
~ W.S. Merwin

At the end of the world  
the power-wielders will send their messages  
and the generals will give their commands  
and the officers will push their buttons,  
and death will fall like rain...

or maybe the billionaires will make their money  
and the entrepreneurs will manufacture their goods  
and the factories will spew their poisons  
and the clouds will descend...

or maybe the demagogues will suggest  
and the pundits will assert  
and the people will believe  
and the massacres will commence...

but somewhere people will gather—many—  
different ages, languages, religions,  
and they will sing together  
and the world will not end.  
~ Steve Garnaas-Holmes

### Silence

In order for music to be made, you must have elements of both sound and silence. This is a perfect metaphor for our relationship with God. God lures us into God's holy silence by what is resonating most in our lives. It is there that God is waiting to meet us.

~ Br. Jim Woodrum



# ST MARY SCHOLA

presents

## *A Neapolitan Christmas*

TICKETS  
AVAILABLE AT  
[stmaryschola.org](http://stmaryschola.org)

CHRISTIAN  
CLOUGH  
guest director

**Friday 15 December, 7:30 PM**

**The Episcopal Church of Saint Mary, Falmouth**

**and Saturday 16 Dec, 4 PM at St. Luke's Cathedral, Portland**

*There will be a preconcert talk 30 minutes prior to each performance.*



Advent is a journey towards  
Bethlehem. May we let ourselves  
be drawn by the light of God  
made man.  
- Pope Francis

[thepassionists.org](http://thepassionists.org)

### **Welcome, Bruno Mbongo**

We are pleased to announce that we have hired Bruno's start-up company to clean the church and parish house following Roy's retirement from Saint Mary's at the end of September. Bruno and his wife come from the Democratic Republic of Congo and have been in the United States about ten years.

Bruno also works at St. Luke's, St. Elizabeth's and St. Peter's.

Please welcome Bruno when you see him in about on the SM campus.





# Thanks, Kudos and Notes!

(Send your 1-3 line notes, announcements or thanks to Beth at [admin@smary.org](mailto:admin@smary.org) by the 20th of the previous month)

Merci

Kudos to the souper supper team for elegantly serving a turkey dinner at the last minute in October when the Community Supper was cancelled!

To all the people who participated in Trunk or Treat — lots of fun seeing the array of costumes and decorations!

My gratitude this Thanksgiving goes to everyone at St. Mary's, staff and parishioners, whose gifts of time and energy and love allow me to stay comfortable and safe in my home. I am so proud to be a member of a church who blesses its parishioners with such care and devotion.

Susan Chapman

T  
H  
A  
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K  
S!

All the folks who helped clean up our grounds and buildings! Many hands make light work. It looks beautiful!

Yay!

Thanks to the choir and James Kennerley for the incredible music that pairs beautifully with our services.



ON THE GREEN

Many thanks to Rachel's on the Green restaurant at Val Hala golf course in Cumberland for providing free Thanksgiving meals for some of our parishioners, who were so grateful to receive them!

Send us your milestones, kudos and notes by the 20th of every month!!

## Worship Server Schedule

Be sure to let Beth in the office know if you have switched dates with someone. 781-3366 or [admin@smary.org](mailto:admin@smary.org)

Date	8am Usher	8am EM	10:15 Usher	10:15 Lector	10:15 EM	Acolytes	Altar Flowers	Coffee Hour
Dec 3 Advent 1	Baer C Al A	Lee Dernehl	Tricia W Ryan S	Jeff H	Jeff H Betsy PS	Charlotte Harrison William R	Greens	The Jones
Dec 10 Adv 2 Lessons & Carols	u u	Len T Becky PO John B Al A	Alice B Pat P	Ginny S Andrea MH Stan Linda	~	A A A	Greens	Catherine MT & Clarice
Dec 17 Advent 3	Len T Baer C	Mary Ann	Dawn Y Noah Y	Betsy PS	Betsy PS Jeff H	A	Greens	
Dec 24 Advent 4	Christmas (No 8am)	Pageant at 10:15	u u u	Pageant	Chris M Steve C	~	CMas	
Dec 24	4pm usher	4pm Readers	4pm EM	4pm Acolytes	9pm usher	9pm Readers	9pm EM	9pm Acolytes
Christmas Eve	Tricia W Ryan S	Erin MF Neila OB Joyce V Becky P	Joyce V Becky P		Tom L	Andrea MH Stan E?	Andrea MH Stan E	
Dec 25 Cmas Day	Merry	Christmas	u	Stan E	Stan E	~	CMas	~
Dec 31 Cmas 1	Len T	Al A	Alice & Pat	Len Verey	Stan E	~	CMas	



Some important dates in Saint Mary's parish family



# Happy December Birthdays to:

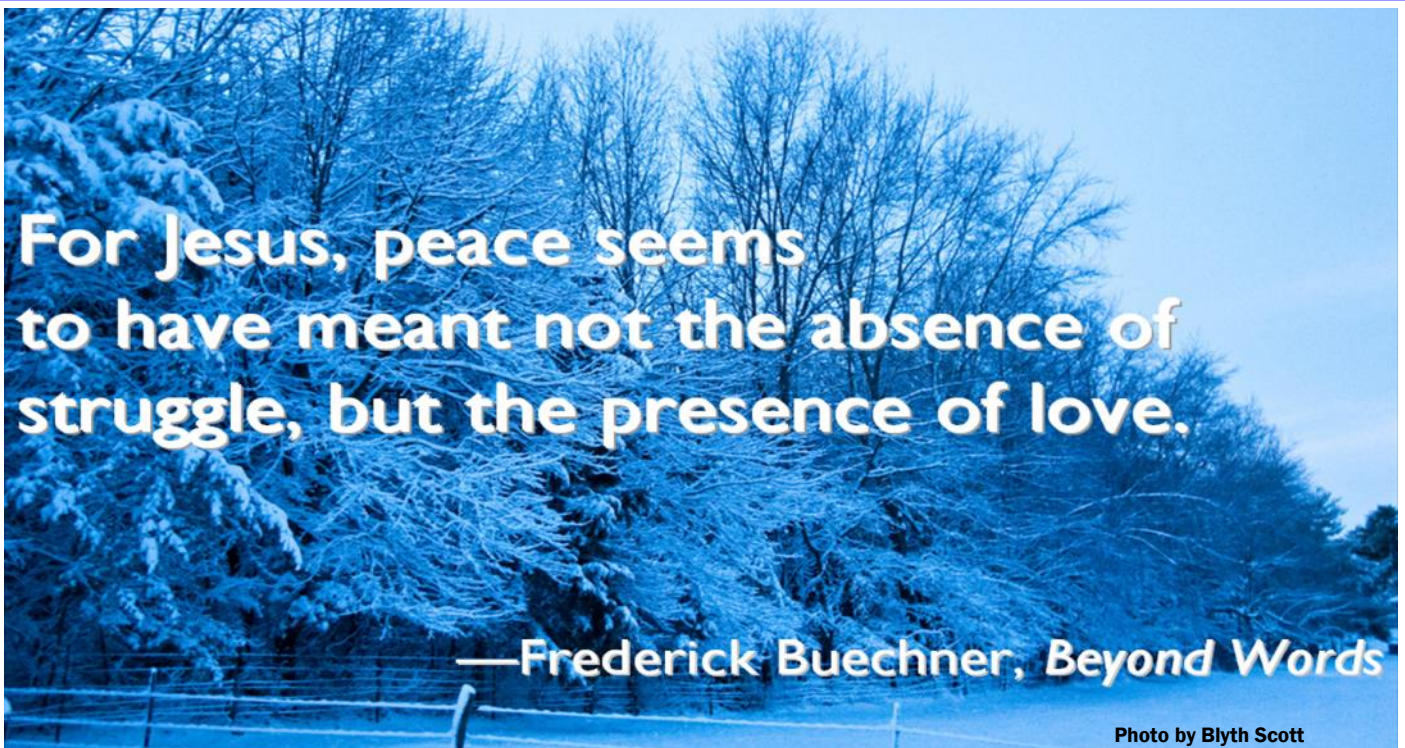
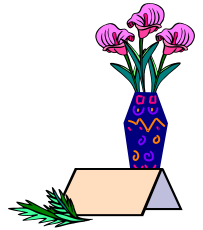
- |    |                   |    |                  |    |                  |
|----|-------------------|----|------------------|----|------------------|
| 1  | Len Taylor        | 15 | Sonia Barter     |    |                  |
| 3  | McIntyre Robich   | 15 | Jan Mordarski    |    |                  |
| 5  | Agnes Parks-Stamm | 15 | Sharon Pedersen  |    |                  |
| 6  | Missy Smithwick   | 15 | Karee Rhoades    |    |                  |
| 8  | Neila Blake       | 16 | Ron Vincent      |    |                  |
| 8  | Meredith Herrold  | 17 | Joe LaPlante     | 22 | Mary Ahlers      |
| 8  | Melissa Kane      | 18 | Susan Chapman    | 22 | Emma Ross        |
| 9  | George Bokinsky   | 18 | Tom Leighton     | 24 | Nancy Russell    |
| 9  | Adeline Scott     | 18 | Henry Shannon    | 25 | Mark Legere      |
| 11 | Michael Kane      | 19 | Katie Clark      | 26 | Caroline Grace   |
| 13 | Sarah Caven       | 20 | Charlotte Reaves | 27 | Garrett Bowne, V |
| 14 | Alice Brock       | 20 | Chris Richards   | 29 | Michael Manetti  |
| 14 | Lowell Brown, Jr. | 20 | Kayla Rose       | 31 | Ruth Kimball     |
| 14 | Ava Draeger       | 21 | Harold Otte      | 31 | Mary Ann McLean  |
| 14 | Kate Barter       | 21 | Elle Reeves      |    |                  |

**We'd love to include good wishes on your birthday and anniversary. If we don't yet have the dates, please update your information in Realm, our online parish database. Thanks!**

# Happy December Anniversary wishes to:



- |    |                     |    |                        |
|----|---------------------|----|------------------------|
| 19 | Beppie & Bob Cerf   | 29 | Sarah & Tim Caven      |
| 28 | Kyla & David Duchin | 30 | Meredeth & Mark Winter |



For Jesus, peace seems to have meant not the absence of struggle, but the presence of love.

—Frederick Buechner, *Beyond Words*










Photo by Blyth Scott



# December 2023

The Episcopal Church of Saint Mary



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>3 Advent 1</b> <b>8 Quiet Eucharist</b> 9:15 Formation Hour 10 Guiding RAY classes <b>10:15 Choral Eucharist</b> 3 Kelly Bellimer Memorial 4-6:30 OC rehearsal 7 12-step meeting	<b>4</b> 12 Noonday Prayer 4-6 Horizon Voice 5 Be Still 6 PCC rehearsal	<b>5</b> 9 <sup>2</sup> -12 <sup>2</sup> Art Group 10 <sup>2</sup> Wisdom Seekers 12 Noonday Prayer 2-4 St E's Board meeting 4 FLUKES rehearse in Aud 6/7 12-step in Aud & GR 7 Schola rehearsal—Sanct.	<b>6 ST. NICHOLAS</b> 9-11 Mainely Weavers 12 Noonday Prayer 4 <sup>2</sup> -7 <sup>2</sup> Horizon Voices 6 ORI	<b>7</b> <b>12 Healing Eucharist</b> 3 Merton Group 5 Outreach meeting 6 AIAnon in GR 6:30 SMChoir rehearsal	<b>12/10 Office closed</b> <i>Sparkles set-up</i> <b>12/8</b> <b>5-7 Souper Supper</b> 	<b>12/2 Sparkles Fair 9-1</b>  <b>12/9</b> 1 Tim Meyer Memorial serv & reception
<b>10 Advent 2</b> <b>8 Advent Lessons &amp; Carols</b> 9:30 Formation Hour <b>10:15 Advent Lessons &amp; Carols</b> 3-6 HV rehearsal 4-6:30 OC rehearsal 7 12-step meeting	<b>11</b> 9 Staff meeting 10-3 GC Silver Tea 4-6 Horizon Voice 5 Be Still 6 PCC rehearsal	<b>12</b> 9 <sup>2</sup> -12 <sup>2</sup> Art Group 10 <sup>2</sup> Wisdom Seekers 12 Noonday Prayer 4 FLUKES rehearsal 6/7 12-step in Aud & GR 7 Schola in Sanctuary	<b>13</b> 12 Noonday Prayer 4 <sup>2</sup> -7 <sup>2</sup> Horizon Voices 6 ORI	<b>14</b> <b>12 Healing Eucharist</b> 3 Merton Group 5:30 Sacred Ground 6 AIAnon in GR 6:30 SMChoir rehearsal	<b>15 Office closed</b> <b>AVE deadline</b>  <b>7:30 St. Mary Schola Concert</b>	<b>16</b> <b>9-1 Advent Quiet Morning</b> 9-2 JAYS SA Tea in Aud
<b>17 Advent 3</b> <b>8 Quiet Eucharist</b> 9:15 Formation Hour 10 Guiding RAY classes <b>10:15 Choral Eucharist</b> 11:30 Pageant rehearsal 7 12-step meeting	<b>18 AVE deadline</b> 12 Noonday Prayer 3 CARE meeting 4-6 Horizon Voice 5 Be Still 6 PCC rehearsal	<b>19</b> <b>8:30-11 St. Elizabeth's</b> 9 <sup>2</sup> -12 <sup>2</sup> Art Group 10 <sup>2</sup> Wisdom Seekers 12 Noonday Prayer 4 FLUKES rehearsal 6/7 12-step in Aud & GR	<b>20</b> 8-5 Garden Club Wrkshp 12 Noonday Prayer 4 <sup>2</sup> -7 <sup>2</sup> Horizon Voices 6 Vestry meeting	<b>21 ST. THOMAS</b> 9-5 Lifeline Screening <b>12 Blue Christmas HE</b> 3 Merton Group 6 AIAnon in GR	<b>22 Office closed</b> <b>5-7 Souper Supper</b> 	<b>23</b> 
<b>24 Advent 4 / Christmas Eve</b> <b>10:15 Christmas Pageant</b> <b>4 Family Christmas Lessons and Carols with Communion</b> 7 12-step meeting <b>9 Candlelight Choral Eucharist</b>	<b>25 Christmas Day</b> 10:15 Festive Christmas Eucharist  	<b>26 ST. STEPHEN</b> <i>Office closed</i> 12 Pray where you are 6/7 12-step in Aud & G	<b>27 ST. JOHN</b> <i>Office closed</i> 12 Pray where you are	<b>28 HOLY INNOCENTS</b> <i>Office closed</i>  <b>9 - 2 Blood Drive</b> 12 Pray where you are	<b>29 Office closed</b> <b>11 Baby Shower</b>	<b>30</b>
<i>The Parish Office will be closed until Tuesday 02 January 2024</i>						
<b>31 Christmas 1</b> <b>8 Quiet Eucharist</b> <b>10:15 Choral Eucharist</b> 7 12-step meeting	<b>1/1 Office closed</b>  <i>Office closed</i>	<b>1/2</b> 9 <sup>2</sup> -12 <sup>2</sup> Art Group 10 <sup>2</sup> Wisdom Seekers 12 Noonday Prayer 4 FLUKES rehearse in Aud 6/7 12-step in Aud & GR	<b>1/3</b> 12 Noonday Prayer 4 <sup>2</sup> -7 <sup>2</sup> Horizon Voices	<b>1/4</b> <b>12 Healing Eucharist</b> 3 Merton Group 6 AIAnon in GR	<b>1/5 Office closed</b>	<b>1/6 The Epiphany</b>



**THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF SAINT MARY**

43 Foreside Road  
Falmouth, ME 04105  
207-781-3366 / www.smary.org

**SUNDAY WORSHIP**

8:00 - *Quiet Eucharist*  
9:15 - *Formation hour*  
10:15 - *Choral Eucharist*

**WEEKDAYS IN THE CHAPEL:**

**MONDAY - WEDNESDAY**

12 Noon Day Prayer

**THURSDAY**

12 Healing Eucharist

**BE STILL CENTERING PRAYER**

5:00 Mondays



**YOUR STAFF**

The Rev. Nathan Ferrell, *Rector*  
[nathanferrell@smary.org](mailto:nathanferrell@smary.org)

The Rev. Matthew Simpson, *Deacon*  
[deaconmatthew@smary.org](mailto:deaconmatthew@smary.org)

James Kennerley, *Music Minister*  
[james@smary.org](mailto:james@smary.org)

Meg Hurdman, *Family Minister*  
[GuidingRAY@smary.org](mailto:GuidingRAY@smary.org)

Beth Shaw, *Parish Manager*  
[admin@smary.org](mailto:admin@smary.org)

**OFFICE HOURS**

**MON - THU, 9 - 4**

Copy deadline for JAN AVE: DEC 18

**YOUR 2023 VESTRY**

Nathan Ferrell, Rector, 207-310-0268, [nathanferrell@smary.org](mailto:nathanferrell@smary.org)

Janet Bowne, Sr. Warden, 318-7045, [jmitchellbowne@gmail.com](mailto:jmitchellbowne@gmail.com)

Steve Conley, Jr. Warden, 751-6738, [Steve.Conley@point32health.org](mailto:Steve.Conley@point32health.org)

Peter Guyton, Treasurer, 409-0782, [peter.guyton@3dogyard.com](mailto:peter.guyton@3dogyard.com)

Darren Clark, 781-424-9905, [ddclark@maine.rr.com](mailto:ddclark@maine.rr.com)

Kathy Galen, 603-723-5145, [kathleendaisy@aol.com](mailto:kathleendaisy@aol.com)

Rudy Israel, 917-923-9444, [rfisrael@aol.com](mailto:rfisrael@aol.com)

Tom LaPlante, 272-5621, [laplante@maine.rr.com](mailto:laplante@maine.rr.com)

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Steve Reeves, 615-440-2505, [stevekreeves@gmail.com](mailto:stevekreeves@gmail.com)

Ben Russell, 883-6544, [blr@maine.rr.com](mailto:blr@maine.rr.com)