

**This Sunday:
The Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**December 24, 2023
9:00 AM
Holy Eucharist**

Join us in person for our service.

Or join us by going to the Parish Facebook page for the online service:

<https://www.facebook.com/stpetersport/>

The worship leaflet can be found [here](#).

The Song of Praise, "Why is it so?" can be found [here](#).

There will be a coffee hour after the mass.

Sunday Morning Ministers:

December 24: 9 AM Mass

Eucharistic Minister: Tom Ainsworth

Crucifer: Wayne Franklin

Lector: Cindy Sherwood

Usher: Bob Simmons

Coffee Hour Hosts: The Keniston Family; Bring a holiday treat from home to add to the table.

Music Notes for this Sunday are found at the end of Key Notes.

Dear Friends,

“Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat...” So go the opening words of a traditional English song sung at this time of year. One could just as easily sing, “Christmas is coming, the schedule’s getting full...” For so it is.

We have observed a shorter Advent this year, with the Fourth Sunday of Advent being on the morning of Christmas Eve. We will have our regular mass at 9:00 AM this Sunday, lighting the fourth candle on the Advent wreath. Then, as if by magic, the church will be transformed for the celebration of Christmas that begins with our Christmas Eve service at 7:00 PM that evening (see how you can help with that magic below). Please note that incense will be used at that service.

Then, on Christmas Day, there will be a quiet and joyful mass at 9:00 AM at church. A late and welcome addition to our schedule is a concert on Saturday December 30th at 4:00 PM by The Ladies of Amethyst Project, a group from the Brunswick area that includes our own resident soloist, Mary Sullivan. Details also are below. I hope you can join us. Then, on Sunday December 31, our morning service takes the form of a Service of Lessons and Carols, based on the much loved Christmas Eve liturgy conducted every year at King's Chapel in Cambridge, England.

I know there are many claims upon our time and energy during the Christmas season. Please remember that our engagement in worship, fellowship, and music making nourish us and energize us as well for all that we are about.

May you have a blessed rest of Advent and a holy and happy Christmas.

Faithfully,
Fr. Tom

Bring a Treat for Coffee Hour This Sunday

The coffee will be on for our coffee hour after the mass this Sunday morning. We are inviting those who can to bring a holiday treat to add to the table - either savory or sweet. Perhaps you can put a few extra Christmas cookies aside and bring them to church Sunday morning.

Decorating the Church for Christmas This Sunday

With the fourth Sunday of Advent falling on December 24 this year, we do not have much time to change from the Advent season to the celebration of Christmas later that evening. As we finish up coffee hour Sunday morning, any who wish can help upstairs with arranging poinsettias and helping Altar Guild members prepare the altar.

Youth Service Corps Brought Winter Warmth to Maine Needs

The Youth Service Corps met last Sunday afternoon. Those attending first met at Marden's in Scarborough. Teams were created to find and purchase winter boots, gloves, mittens, hats and socks. Over \$3000 of goods were purchased. The group brought them to Maine Needs on Forest Ave, and after some pizza, learned about how the organization distributes items to persons in need. Everyone then helped to select and pack bags for client requests. Several kids and adults from St. Peter's participated.

The group will meet the third Sunday of every month, and

for a change of pace, the January gathering will be for a fun snow tubing party.



Winter Coat and Boot Drive for St. Elizabeth's Continues

We continue to collect winter coats and boots, as well as hats, gloves, and mittens, for St. Elizabeth's Essentials

Pantry. Goods can be left on the back counter in the undercroft, to the right of the entryway. Thank you for many generous donations!

Caroling, Caroling...

Thank you to the Hickey family for the invitation to go caroling in their neighborhood last Sunday evening. Several of us from the parish joined them and some others for a delightful evening. Hot cocoa, tea, and refreshments were set out for when we arrived and returned from serenading the neighbors. And the smiles on the neighbors' faces certainly brightened the evening, even if there was just a little rain.





There is still time to make a pledge for 2024 to St. Peters. Be assured that pledges are confidential information held by the treasurer. Pledge forms can be found at church or [here](#).

Vestry Highlights

The vestry met on Tuesday evening, rescheduling its meeting from Monday due to power outages for some vestry members. Among the items discussed:

An update on exterior masonry repairs: Work has begun to repair and restore stonework. You will see scaffolding outside different parts of the building in weeks to come. The vestry will also continue to explore ways of funding this project of \$60,000.



A new letter of agreement between the rector and the parish was approved by the vestry. Fr. Tom is completing his third

year with St. Peter's, the time period stipulated in the original letter of agreement. The new letter renews the relationship for another year. You will hear more details at the annual meeting in January.

Junior Warden Wayne Franklin reported that during the storm on Monday, a portion of a dead tree on our property on the side of Bethany House had come down onto the neighbor's property and was leaning against their house. Thank you to Wayne for removing the large limb, and to Bob Simmons, who assisted Wayne in removing the rest of the tree.


The vestry reviewed the proposed budget for 2024, and will meet on Zoom on Monday January 8 for a final review and vote to approve the budget. While the parish does not vote on the budget, we will be bringing it to the annual meeting for your review and any questions you may have.

Annual Meeting Date Set for January 21

Our annual meeting of the parish will take place after the Sunday mass on January 21. Please do plan to attend.


If you are newer to the community, you may want to consider officially becoming a member of the parish. Those who join have voting rights at the annual meeting, as well as making a commitment to support the parish through contributions of time, talent and treasure. If you are interested or have questions, please speak to Fr. Tom.

If you are a church officer or leader of a ministry, you received an email from the rector asking you to submit a written report for the Annual Meeting booklet. Please complete these reports by January 7.




A Ceremony of Carols & other ancient tunes and texts

Featuring:



The Ladies of the Amethyst Project
Mary Sullivan, soprano and workshop director
Joëlle Morris, mezzo-soprano
Sean Fleming, piano and organ



**A CONCERT OFFERING AT ST. PETER'S:
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30 AT 4 PM.**

The Ladies of the Amethyst Project (Amethyst Chamber Ensemble's vocal chamber music workshop), alongside the vocal professionals of Amethyst, will offer Benjamin Britten's wonderful "Ceremony of Carols", along with Christmas carols and other songs of the season. Come join us, and celebrate the turning of the year from darkness into light.

OPEN TO ALL WITH NO ADMISSION CHARGE.

Looking Ahead

Fourth Sunday of Advent: December 24, with coffee hour to follow the mass.

Christmas Eve Service on Sunday Dec. 24th at 7:00 PM

Christmas Day Mass on Monday Dec. 25th at 9:00 AM

**A Ceremony of Carols Concert on Sat. Dec. 30 at
4:00 PM**

**Lessons and Carols Service on Sun. Dec. 31st at
9:00 AM**

Compline Link

Join us for the Compline Prayer Service on Zoom on
Wednesday, December 27.

Here is the service for Compline.

The Zoom link is **here**.

Liturgical Rota for December

December 24: 9 AM Mass

Eucharistic Minister: Tom Ainsworth

Crucifer: Wayne Franklin

Lector: Emily Keniston

Usher: Bob Simmons

Coffee Hour Hosts: Bring a holiday treat from home!

December 24: Christmas Eve

Eucharistic Minister: Tom Ainsworth

Crucifer: Steve Koskinen

Lector: Emily Keniston

Usher: Bob Simmons

December 31

Eucharistic Minister: Lenita Richard

Crucifer: Fred Fowler

Lector: Anita Chandler

Usher: Anita Chandler

Coffee Hour Hosts: Lorna Blackmer and Jane Noone

Weekly Prayer List

Prayers For Parishioners, Families, and Friends

Ann Marie Cady
Allison Schroth
Francisco Andreu
Steve Secord
Diane Dalton
Judy Howes
David and Dino Rice
Robert Stillings
Linda Foster
Fred Fowler

Peter Haskell, *friend of Allison Schroth*
Martha and Steve Gagliardi, *friends of Fr. Tom*
Tommy Valente, *friend of Don and Ann Marie Cady*
Jane Reiha, *friend of Judy Howes*
Brenda Pappalardo, *friend of Judy Howes*
Stephen and Rebecca Seraniche, *friends of Dino Rice*
Marge Devine, *family member of Allison Schroth*
Jimmy Devine, *family member of Allison Schroth*
Sharon Bay, *family member of Ann Bay*
Fuji Sprott, *friend of David and Dino Rice*
Steve Garnett, *friend of Cindy Sherwood*

If you wish to add or return persons to the prayer list, please contact our Prayer Ministry Coordinators:

Allison Schroth, at: 207-807-1315
ASchroth@maine.rr.com

or

Emma Bond at: 207-619-3662
emma.e.bond@gmail.com

A Prayer for Those We Love

Almighty God, we entrust all who are dear to us to your never-failing care and love, for this life and the life to come, knowing

that you are doing for them better things than we can desire or pray for; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

From *The Book of Common Prayer*

MUSIC NOTES FOR THIS SUNDAY

Although a widely-published and much admired composer, Iowa native Alice Jordan chose Des Moines as the base of her professional activity, and showed little interest in pursuing the higher profile that guest professorships and residencies would have brought. Her husband, Frank Jordan, was a noted organist and college dean, and Alice composed extensively to provide new music for church use and recitals.

The author of "Watchman, Tell Us Of The Night"--John Bowring (1792-1872)-- knew something of which he spoke. He uses the imagery of a traveller to recreate the longings expressed in Isaiah 21: 11-12. Bowring himself travelled extensively in various diplomatic roles, and was Governor of Hong Kong (this, of course, during the days when "the sun never set on the British Empire.")

The hymn "Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming" was a favorite of Martin Luther, and paints a picture of Christ as the rose dispelling darkness and death. The tune, with its lovely melody and subtleties of rhythm, is usually sung to the famous harmonization by the great Renaissance composer Michael Praetorius.

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) was widely acknowledged as one of the major poets of the Victorian period, and her work continues to be widely read. The daughter of a professor of Italian literature at King's College, London, she published in 1885 a volume of poems entitled, *Time Flies*. It was well received, but the greatest praise was given to one of its seemingly simplest poems: *Love Came Down at Christmas*, which Queen Victoria copied out by hand to place in her Bible.

"It Came Upon The Midnight Clear" may be the only commonly sung Christmas carol in our hymnals that does not mention the birth of Christ! As the much admired United Methodist hymnologist Carlton Young has pointed out, "The focus is rather on the song of the angels, 'Peace on earth, good will to men ' (Luke 2:14)." He continues: "It is right that we should sing "Hark, The Herald Angels Sing" and "Joy To The World" each Christmas season. But always there are moments when we realize the message of peace has not yet been fully realized on earth. Then we sing "It Came Upon The Midnight Clear," and the power of the Incarnation and the message of the gospel touch us even more deeply."

Louis Claude Daquin (1694-1772) was widely considered to be the finest French organist of his era. Born into a family of Jewish intellectuals, he played for King Louis XIV at the age of 6, and was courted by the French aristocracy ever afterward. In 1739 he was named official organist to the king, and in 1755 received the additional appointment as titular organist of Notre Dame Cathedral. ~HT

Mary Sullivan, our resident soloist, will be with us this evening on Christmas Eve at 7 PM.

St. Peter's Church | 678 Washington Ave., Portland, ME 04103

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