

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 18, 2016

*Our King and Saviour draws near!
O come, let us worship!*

8:30 a.m. – Morning Prayer:

✠ Psalm 33 | Isaiah 35 | St. Matthew 25:31-end

9:00 a.m. – The Holy Eucharist

Introit Psalm 19:1-6:	page 351
The Lighting of the Advent Wreath	
<i>The Gloria is omitted during Advent</i>	
The Collect and Epistle:	page 102
Gradual Psalm 145:18-22:	page 517
The Holy Gospel:	page 103
The Creed:	page 71
The Prayers of the People:	L: Lord, in thy mercy; C: Hear our prayer
The Consecration:	page 82
Post-Communion Prayer:	page 85

9:45 a.m. – Sunday School: Parish Hall – Time with Fr. Stockall

10:30 a.m. – The Holy Eucharist

♫ Processional Hymn:	63 (Merton)
The Lighting of the Advent Wreath	
<i>The Gloria is omitted during Advent</i>	
The Collect and Epistle:	page 102

Gradual Psalm 145:18-22:	page 517
The Holy Gospel:	page 103
♫ Gospel Acclamation:	Alleluia
The Creed:	page 71
The Homily	
♫ Offertory Hymn:	229 (Picardy)
The Prayers of the People:	L: Lord, in thy mercy; C: Hear our prayer
The Consecration:	page 82
♫ Hymn during Communion:	65 (St. Stephen)
Post-Communion Prayer:	page 85
♫ Recessional Hymn:	293 (Ascension)

*Please join us in the Parish Hall following the
10:30 Celebration for Coffee and Conversation.*



From the Rector _____

Have you ever felt that St. Paul's advice in this morning's Epistle seems just a bit impossible; maybe even entirely unrealistic?

Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice!

How can we really rejoice always?

How can we really rejoice and give thanks in each and every situation?

There are, of course, some Christians who would tell us that we must look relentlessly cheerful; that every word we utter must be positive and upbeat: everything is a success, a victory.

But how realistic is that when people have to cope with disaster and tragedy?

Are there not times when God calls us to "weep with those who weep"; and well as "rejoice with those who rejoice?" (Romans 12:15)

That contrast between the struggles and the joys of human life is just as much a part of this joyful time of year as Christmas lights and holiday parties. As much as we like to focus on the happy parts, we can't miss the sadness in the eyes of those who sorrow at this time of year. As we all know, this season can be a very painful time for those who live with loss.

Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice!

But if we remember that Paul likely offers this very challenging advice under house arrest, then perhaps we can get a window into the life-changing advice

that he is offering. Paul is in the City of Rome, following a long and dangerous journey in which he, and the others who were travelling with him, nearly died. He is under constant guard. His life might end in martyrdom at any moment (which actually happens in due time). And yet, he can write to the Christians in another city, in the City of Philippi, about the great joy that he has because of their faith and fellowship with him, in spite of the ever present danger under which he lives!

So, when Paul exhorts them, **and us**, to rejoice always, even in the face of life's challenges, he's speaking with an authority that comes from personal experience. These are not empty words but words all the more powerful because Paul is living them every day.

Paul's ability, **and our ability**, to rejoice always is based not on naivety or wishful thinking or even blind avoidance of reality, but, rather, on the words that follow St. Paul's exhortation:

The Lord is at hand!

Paul can speak about rejoicing in every situation because he knows as well as he knows his own thoughts that the Risen and Ascended Christ stands with him and beside him in each and every one of those situations. Christ is at hand: as close to you right now as your own thoughts. So no matter what comes, no matter what challenges we face, we do so knowing that Christ shares them with us, *every day*; that just as we live in Him, so He lives right now in us; and knowing can make all the difference in the world!



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

DECEMBER 21: ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

2:00 p.m. – Holy Eucharist, *Paradise Villa*

6:30 p.m. – Evening Prayer

7:00 p.m. – Holy Eucharist

DECEMBER 24: THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST CHRISTMAS EVE

6:00 p.m. – Family Eucharist for the Nativity

with St. Mary's 1st POP UP Pageant

9:30 p.m. – Carol Sing

10:00 p.m. – Holy Eucharist for the Nativity

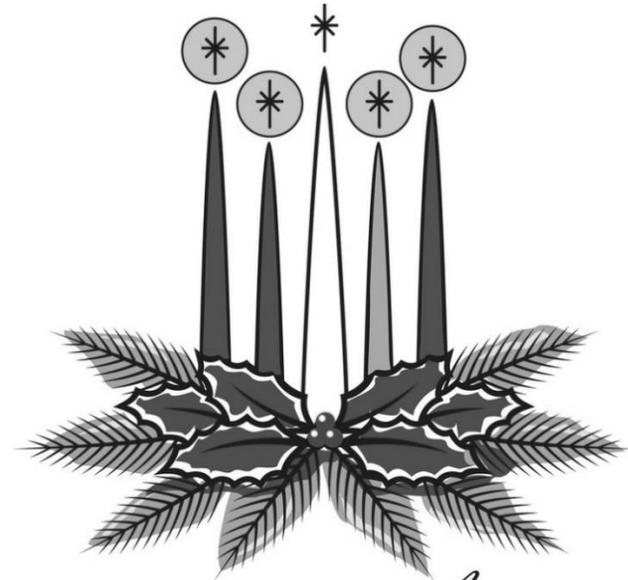
DECEMBER 25: THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST CHRISTMAS DAY

9:30 a.m. – Morning Prayer

10:30 a.m. – Holy Eucharist for the Morning of the Nativity

*The Anglican Church of Canada
The Diocese of Fredericton*

THE PARISH OF ST. MARY (YORK)



4TH SUNDAY OF Advent

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace
among people,
To make music in the heart.

Howard Thurman (1899-1981), *The Mood of Christmas*

Priest and Rector

The Revd. Canon Kevin M. Stockall, B.A. (Hons), M.Div.

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Visit us at: <http://www.stmarysfredericton.ca/>

Honorary Assistant

Fr. David Mercer

Organist

James O'Neil

Pastoral Assistant

Rick Bungay

Parish Notices and Updates _____

Flowers at Christmas: Those who wish to place memorial flowers may do so by including a donation through the collection plate. Please ensure that your donation includes the names of those in whose memory the flowers are being placed, as well as complete information regarding the donor(s); **and to help us to include that information in the Christmas bulletin, we'll need to know by today.** For more information, please speak to the Rector.

A new copy of our schedule of volunteers for Coffee and Conversation is scheduled to come out at the beginning of the New Year. Anyone not currently serving as a volunteer for this important part of our ministry here at St. Mary's is asked to give thought to joining our team. Teams are made up of 5 or 6 members and serve approximately once every six weeks, so the duties are not too demanding. Responsibilities include preparing light refreshments and assisting with cleaning up afterwards. *Please speak to Janice Stockall if you're interested in helping out!*

A few Church Calendars for 2017 are still available on the table in the Narthex for a very reasonable \$6.00. These lovely calendars are an ideal way of keeping track of the Church Year and are excellent small gifts for friends at Christmas. Please speak to the Rector if you can't locate the calendars.

St. Mary's weekly Bible Study "Faithful and True: a Look at the Women in Holy Scripture," has begun its Christmas break. Be sure to gather with us when resume on January 13th.

If you like to knit, St. Mary's Mothers' Union branch invite you to share with them in a project that've recently started. They're knitting *Comfort Bears* to be given to children at the Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital. Instructions have been posted on the Mothers' Union bulletin board in the hall. Feel free to pick up a copy and get knitting!

Allan Agnew, our Parish Treasurer, is asking those who have changed their mailing address since the beginning of the year to let him know your new address so that he can correctly address your 2016 tax receipt. Please speak with him soon or email him at allanagnew@bellaliant.net. He has prepared your 2017 envelopes, which are now available in the Hall. Those with 2016 envelopes will automatically be assigned the same number for next year. If you're not currently using the envelopes and would like a box for next year, please let Allan know.

Please plan to join us on Sunday, January 8th at 10:30 a.m. for our 4th *Annual Festival of Lessons and Carols for Christmas* as the Season of Christmas draws to a conclusion and we enter into the Season of Epiphany. This year we plan to combine our Service with the Holy Eucharist. We hope you can be with us as we bring our celebration of the Season to a delightful close.

Our next Parish SHARED MEAL will be held on *Sunday, January 8th, one week later than usual.* Plan to join us at the start of the Season of Epiphany as we celebrate our life together in Christ!

The Candles of Advent **THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT: LOVE**

Officiant: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,

All: 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.

Reader: Today is the fourth Sunday of Advent, the Sunday of Love.

Reader: Rejoice in the Lord always.

All: And again I say, Rejoice.

Reader: There stands one among you,

All: Whom you do not know.

The Lighting of the Fourth Candle

Reader: Behold the Lamb of God,

All: Which takes away the sin of the world.

Officiant: As we stand, let us pray

All: Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty, to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, now and ever. Amen.

**A candle is burning, a candle of love,
a candle to point us to heaven above,
A baby for Christmas, a wonderful birth,
for Jesus is bringing God's love to our earth.**

"A Candle is Burning" is by Sandra Dean, 1986. Music is "Cradle Song" [Hymn Book 734] by W. J. Kirkpatrick.