

# THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 22, 2019

*Our King and Saviour Draws Near!  
O Come, Let us Worship!*

## **8:30 a.m. – Morning Prayer:**

✠ Psalm 33 | Isaiah 30:8-21 | Revelation 14:13-15:4

## **9:00 a.m. – The Holy Eucharist**

Introit: Psalm 33:1-6: *page 367*  
The Lighting of the Advent Wreath: *please see the bulletin insert*  
*The Gloria is omitted during Advent*  
The Collect: *page 102*  
The Old Testament Reading: *Isaiah 40:1-9*  
Psalm 19:1-6: *page 351*  
The Epistle: *page 102*  
Gradual Psalm 145:18-22: *page 517*  
The Holy Gospel: *page 103*  
The Creed: *page 71*  
The Homily  
The Prayers of the People: *L: Lord, in your 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: *please see the bulletin insert*  
*The Gloria is omitted during Advent*  
The Collect: *page 102*  
The Old Testament Reading: *Isaiah 40:1-9*  
♪ **PSALM:** *please see the bulletin insert*  
The Epistle: *page 102*  
♪ **GRADUAL HYMN:** **65** (St. Stephen)  
The Holy Gospel: *page 103*  
♪ **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:** (Taize)  
Prepare the way of the Lord; Prepare the way of the Lord;  
And all people will see the salvation of our God.  
The Sacrament of Holy Baptism: *page 523*  
The Homily  
♪ **OFFERTORY HYMN: Herald! Sound the Note of Judgement**  
*please see the bulletin insert*  
The Prayers of the People: *L: Lord, in your mercy*  
**C: Hear our prayer**  
The Consecration: *page 82*  
♪ **HYMN DURING COMMUNION:** **229** (Picardy)  
Post-Communion Prayer: *page 85*  
♪ **RECESSIONAL HYMN:** **No Crowded Eastern Street**  
*please see the bulletin insert*

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

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional unceded territory of the Wəlastəkwiyyik (Wolastoqiyik) Peoples. This territory is covered by the “Treaties of Peace and Friendship” which Wəlastəkwiyyik (Wolastoqiyik), Mi'kmaq, and Passamaquoddy Peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1726. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Wəlastəkwiyyik (Wolastoqiyik) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.



## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

### **DECEMBER 24: CHRISTMAS EVE**

4:30 p.m. – Evening Prayer

6:00 p.m. – Family Eucharist of the Nativity  
*With our annual Pop-UP! Pageant*

9:30 p.m. – Carol Sing

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

### **DECEMBER 25: CHRISTMAS DAY**

9:30 a.m. – Morning Prayer

10:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist on the Morning of the Nativity

### **DECEMBER 26: FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN THE MARTYR**

9:30 a.m. – Morning Prayer

10:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist

### **DECEMBER 27: ST. JOHN THE APOSTLE & EVANGELIST**

9:30 a.m. – Morning Prayer

10:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist

### **DECEMBER 28: THE HOLY INNOCENTS**

4:30 p.m. – Evening Prayer

5:00 p.m. – Holy Eucharist

### **DECEMBER 29: THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS**

8:30 a.m. – Morning Prayer

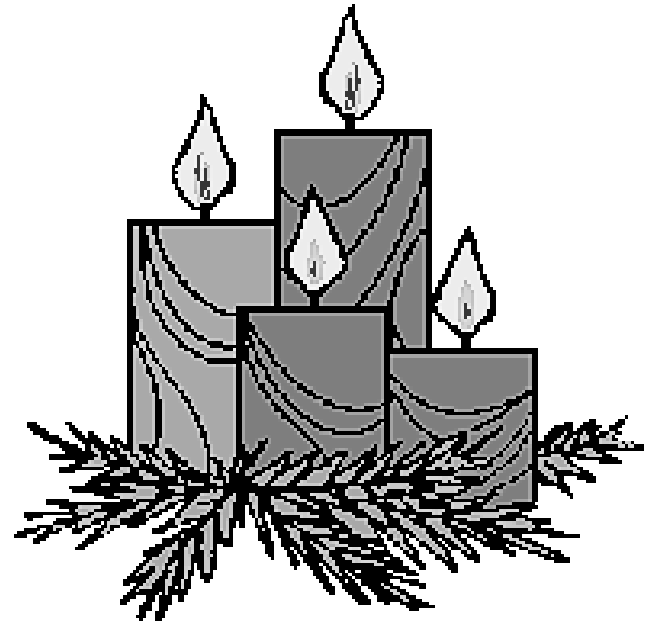
9:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist

9:45 a.m. – Sunday School for All Ages!

10:30 a.m. – Holy Eucharist

*Followed by Coffee and Conversation in the Parish Hall*

# *The Anglican Church of Canada* *The Diocese of Fredericton* THE PARISH OF ST. MARY, YORK



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For now we feel the world spin round  
On some momentous journey bound -  
Journey to what? to whom? to where?  
The Advent bells call out 'Prepare,  
Your world is journeying to the birth  
Of God made Man for us on earth.'

*Advent 1955, John Betjeman*

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#### PRIEST AND RECTOR

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

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We are very pleased to welcome Oaklie Marie, daughter of Katurah and Andrew Waye and sister to Lillian Rosalind, as a member of the Body of Christ and an inheritor of the Kingdom of God. We pray that the Grace which God has shared with her in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism might strengthen her each and every day of her life.



## *From the Rector*

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Maybe it's an incredibly tiny leaking boat, barely afloat, filled with more people than you can imagine, fighting against the winds and waves of the Mediterranean in the darkness of the night; fighting just to escape; fighting to stay alive. Or maybe it's a refugee camp in Lebanon or Uganda or Pakistan or Bangladesh. Or in any of the dozens upon dozens of other camps for refugees and displaced persons in virtually every corner of the globe. Or maybe it's a sparsely furnished apartment in a squalid high rise in the decaying corner of one of a hundred different cities in the world. The squalid little apartment that you share with the members of your extended family, and the members of their extended families, hoping that the landlord never finds out how many you're housing in that cold, dirty, ever-so-tiny space. Or maybe it's a small cell in a detention centre somewhere on the US-Mexico border; where, if you had the choice, you'd give your left arm to be together in that crowded space with your family; but you can't because the border patrol took the kids away; and you don't know where they are; or whether you'll ever see them again. Or, looking back a long time ago, maybe it's the Jewish quarter of Alexandria, in Egypt, where a father and his very young wife and an infant son are desperately trying to find a place to live; a place to stay with those they hope will befriend them; maybe even amongst some of those who have also fled the violence of King Herod.

The story of humanity displaced by war or drought or famine or shame is as old as any story since the dawn of civilisation. Since long before recorded history the threat of violence or starvation, the terror of disasters of nature's making or of ours, have driven our ancestors from their homes, desperately seeking security and peace and hope. And, as so many have before them, even today there are millions who sit in poverty and squalor and disease; who cope with abuse and rejection and violence and fear, hoping for something better; praying for a day when they might go home; to a better home; a safer home; a more peaceful home. The home they'd once had but had lost. Maybe forever.

That's the context in which this morning's Old Testament Lesson is set; an ancient story that plays out even this very moment somewhere is a dark and dirty, cold and cramped corner of the world. But in this case it's the people

of Judah and Jerusalem. And it's more than 500 years before the time of Christ. And it's the Babylonians who have conquered their city, and torn down its walls, and completely destroyed its Temple; who then carried off into Babylon the most powerful and wealthiest of its people, to be exiles forever. To be servants and slaves of the rich and powerful. For the rest of their lives. Maybe even until that day would come when they would forget Jerusalem altogether; when they'd forget that they'd once been the People of God; that they'd once been the people that God had rescued from slavery to be his own people. In their own land.

That's the context in which the Prophet Isaiah writes. But he writes not to remind them of the horrors that they've faced. Not to speak of the disobedience and sin that led to their exile. Not to condemn them. Not to judge them. But to tell them that the time of their trials would soon be over: *Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended. That her iniquity is pardoned;* to tell them that, after all those years as migrants and refugees, their prayers had been heard; that they'd not been forgotten in their exile. That the time had finally come to build a highway: to knock down the high places and buildup the valleys; to bring in the heavy equipment to level the uneven terrain; to make smooth the rough ground; to go home. That the glory of the Lord himself could be revealed. So when, in this morning's Gospel, John the Baptist stands before the representatives of the Temple in Jerusalem to give an answer to their questions, he tells them that what God promised long before to the exiles in Babylon is what God is going to do right then: Who are you? *I'm not the Christ.* Are you Elijah? *I'm not.* Are you the Prophet? *No.* Well then, who are you? Give us an answer. *I am a voice.* I am a voice crying in the silence of the wilderness. I am a voice crying now what God said long ago. Make a way for God to come, because that's exactly what God is going to do.

This morning's Gospel stands at the very end of our Advent journey. On Christmas Eve we'll gather again to hear the timeless tale of that moment when God himself entered into our dark and frightened and disordered world, as he had promised long before through the Prophet Isaiah; to hear once again of that moment when God entered into the reality of our exile that he might take us home. So John's words speak not just of what happened in the darkness of the night in Bethlehem but of what happens every day of our lives whenever we refuse to sit in the darkness of this wilderness which is our current home; whenever we choose to rise above the squalor of bitter humanity condemned to be servants and slaves of our brokenness. So when we gather to hear the thrilling story of Christ's birth we'll hear more than just a story about the birth of a baby: we'll again once again hear the amazing news that **our** exile is over; that Christ has come to level the peaks and fill in the valleys of our many wildernesses; to smooth the rough places of our hearts. That he might one day take us home.