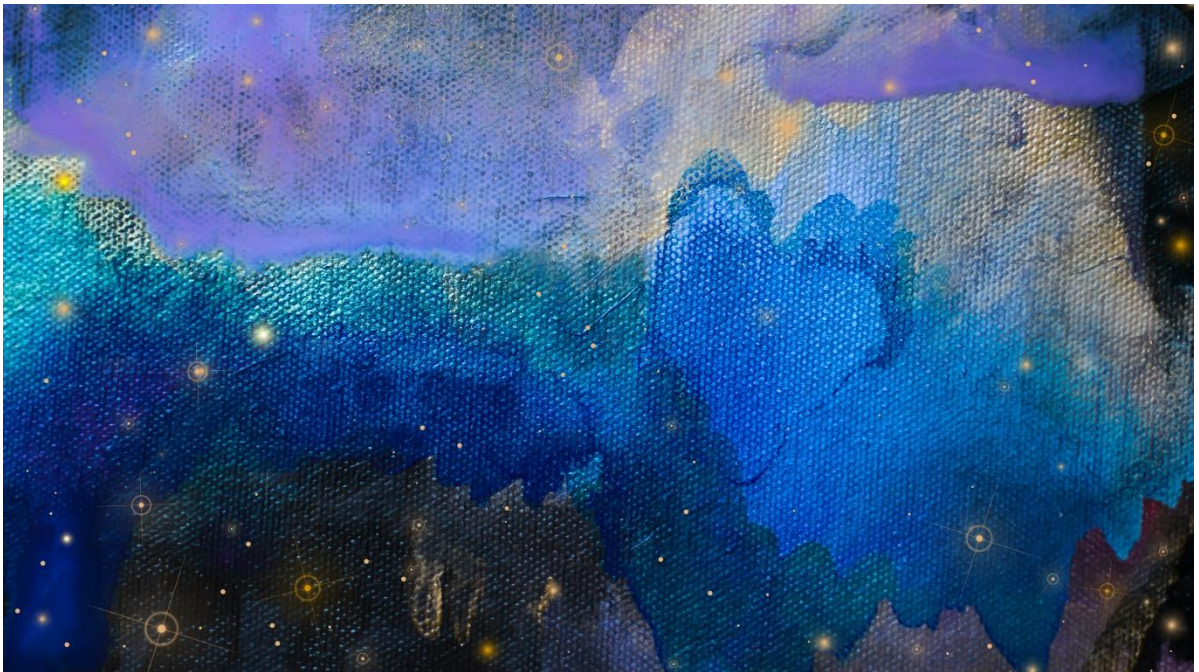




# **Saint Matthew's**

EPISCOPAL CHURCH



**Holy Eucharist - Rite II**  
**The First Sunday of Advent**  
**December 3, 2023**  
**10:00 am**

## The Last Time I Saw God

The last time I saw God face to face  
I was looking at a bed of tulips.  
God was every color of red.  
I was merely a mortal,  
in awe of it all.

The time before that,  
we were tying back the curtains,  
looking for stars.  
God was the deepest purple  
and the brightest light.

The time before that,  
the city was soft with snow.  
God was the quiet  
that tucked us all in.

And in between these small gifts there were  
newborn babies,  
and sapling trees,  
homemade bread,  
the sound of a church singing on Sunday.

...

Why, yes, we are lucky.  
We are more than lucky  
for the moments when  
delight and awe  
unzip the weight  
we carry around.

## Welcome to St. Matthew's! We are glad you are here.

The People are invited to read the words in **bold**. If you're joining us from home, please stand, kneel, sing, and pray with us as you're able. No matter where you are, joining in this worship service is a form of prayer that connects you to God and to each other. Whenever two or three are gathered, even virtually, Scripture reminds us that Jesus is present among us.

**Children are most welcome and are encouraged to participate in worship.**

To the parents of children: Relax! God put the wiggle in children. Sit toward the front so your little ones can see and hear. Go ahead and quietly answer their questions. If you don't know the answer, the priest would love to talk to your little one. When you sing the hymns and join in the prayers, you teach little hearts how to be faithful; you are their best model. If you need to leave the service, that's okay. Don't be shy about coming back. It was Jesus who said, "Let the little children come to me."

**Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, there is a place for you at St. Matt's.**

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### Prelude

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

*"Sleepers, wake!" A voice astounds us, BWV 645*

*The hymns can be found in the blue hymnals. Please stand as you are able.*

### Processional Hymn 61

WACHET AUF

"Sleepers, wake!" A voice astounds us

### The Lighting of the First Candle

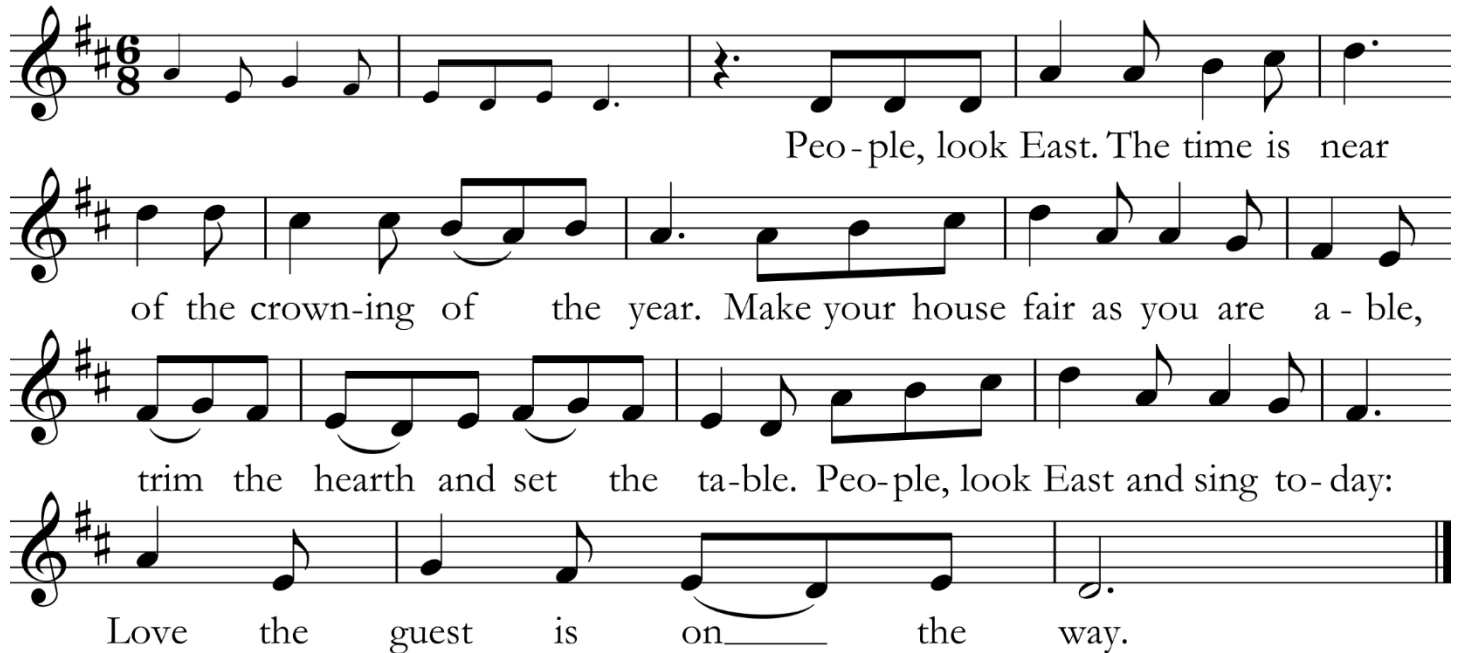
*Lector* The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light; those who live in a land of deep shadow, on them a light has shined.

Isaiah 9:2

*Celebrant* Almighty God, grant that the love of your Son, Jesus Christ, may so light our whole lives that we need never again walk in darkness. **Amen.**

# Carol at the Candle Lighting

# BESANÇON CAROL



Peo-ple, look East. The time is near  
of the crown-ing of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,  
trim the hearth and set the ta-ble. Peo-ple, look East and sing to-day:  
Love the guest is on the way.

## + THE WORD OF GOD +

*Celebrant* Blessed are you, holy and living One.  
*People* You come to your people and set them free.

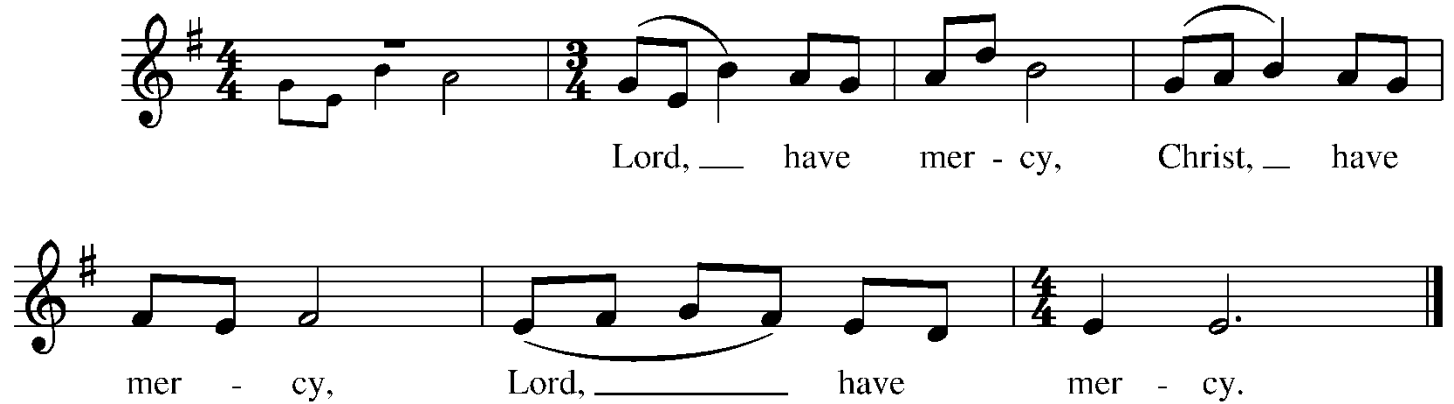
### The Collect for Purity *(said by all)*

Almighty God,  
to you all hearts are open,  
all desires known  
and from you no secrets are hid:  
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

# Kyrie eleison

*Sung by all*

*setting by William Bradley Roberts (b. 1955)*



musical score for Kyrie eleison, featuring two staves of music in G major. The first staff begins in 4/4 time, changes to 3/4, and then back to 4/4. The lyrics are: Lord, — have mer - cy, Christ, — have mer - cy, Lord, — have mer - cy.

## The Collect of the Day

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* Let us pray. Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your 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 living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*The congregation may be seated.*

## The First Reading

Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at your presence--  
as when fire kindles brushwood  
and the fire causes water to boil--  
to make your name known to your adversaries,  
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!  
When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,  
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.  
From ages past no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who works for those who wait for him.  
You meet those who gladly do right,  
those who remember you in your ways.  
But you were angry, and we sinned;  
because you hid yourself we transgressed.  
We have all become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.  
We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.  
There is no one who calls on your name,  
or attempts to take hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us,  
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.  
Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.  
Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,  
and do not remember iniquity forever.  
Now consider, we are all your people.

*Lector*     The Word of the Lord.

*People*     **Thanks be to God.**

## Responsorial Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

*Refrain, sung first by the Choir, then again by all:*

I am the vine; you are the  
branch - es, root - ed in faith and love.

*Choir alone:*

- <sup>1</sup> Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; \*  
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
- <sup>2</sup> In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, \*  
stir up your strength and come to help us.
- <sup>3</sup> Restore us, O God of hosts; \*  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- <sup>4</sup> O Lord God of hosts, \*  
how long will you be angered  
despite the prayers of your people?
- <sup>5</sup> You have fed them with the bread of tears; \*  
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- <sup>6</sup> You have made us the derision of our neighbors, \*  
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- <sup>7</sup> Restore us, O God of hosts; \*  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

*All sing the refrain*

I\_ am the vine; you are the  
branch - es, root - ed in faith\_ and love.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and common time. The melody is written in a treble clef. The lyrics are placed below the notes, with some words underlined. The first staff contains the lyrics 'I\_ am the vine; you are the' and the second staff contains 'branch - es, root - ed in faith\_ and love.' The music consists of quarter and eighth notes, with some phrases connected by slurs.

<sup>16</sup> Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, \*  
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.

<sup>17</sup> And so will we never turn away from you; \*  
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.

<sup>18</sup> Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; \*  
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

*All sing the refrain*

I\_ am the vine; you are the  
branch - es, root - ed in faith\_ and love.

This block is identical to the one above, showing the same musical notation and lyrics for the refrain.



## The Second Reading

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind-- just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you-- so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Lector*      The Word of the Lord.

*People*      **Thanks be to God.**

*Children in Pre-K - 7th Grade may proceed to their classrooms for Church School at the beginning of the hymn.*

*Please stand as you are able.*

## Sequence Hymn 64

O HEILAND, REISS

“O heavenly Word, eternal Light”

## The Holy Gospel

Matthew 13:24-37

*Celebrant*    The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew.

*People*      **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, “In those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light,  
and the stars will be falling from heaven,  
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

*Celebrant* The Gospel of the Lord.

*People* **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

## **The Sermon**

The Rev. Marissa Rohrbach

## **The Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## The Prayers of the People

*The Intercessor begins, the People respond with the words in bold.*

*Intercessor* Beloved of God, what I say to you I say to all: keep awake. Let us appeal to God, saying, “Show the light of your countenance, *and we shall be saved.*”

*Intercessor* Restore your holy catholic Church, O Lord God of hosts. Give us eyes to see that together we have all that we need to serve and to celebrate, to give and to receive, to love and to build. Strengthen us that we may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. Show the light of your countenance,

*People* **And we shall be saved.**

*Intercessor* Restore justice throughout the world, O Lord God of hosts. You work for those who wait for you. Come to the help of the oppressed and the needy. Show the light of your countenance,

*People* **And we shall be saved.**

*Intercessor* Restore your creation, O Lord God of hosts. Awesome are your deeds and wonderful are the works of your hands. Show the light of your countenance,

*People* **And we shall be saved.**

*Intercessor* Restore peace in our community, O Lord God of hosts. Make us mindful of our interdependence. Help us to respect the dignity of our neighbors near and far. Show the light of your countenance,

*People* **And we shall be saved.**

*Intercessor* Restore the weak to strength, O Lord God of hosts. Come quickly with healing in your wings. We pray especially for Thomas, Diana, James, Carol, Susan, Lee, Arlene, Barbara, Mike, Jack, Chuck, Joan, David, Liz, Ann, Jack, Pat, Kathy, Dick, Scott, Martin, Ann, Melinda, Aaron, Dann and Presiding Bishop Michael Curry. We also remember those we name now either silently or aloud. Show the light of your countenance,

*People* **And we shall be saved.**

*Intercessor* Restore our hope, O Lord God of hosts. Though we all fade like a leaf, still you are faithful. You have called your people into the fellowship of your Son forever. Show the light of your countenance,

*People* **And we shall be saved.**

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

*The People may add their own intercessions either silently or aloud.*

*Silence may be kept.*

*Celebrant* So may we know the hope that is not just for someday but for this day—here, now, in this moment that opens to us: hope not made of wishes but of substance, hope made of sinew and muscle and bone, hope that has breath and a beating heart, hope that will not keep quiet and be polite, hope that knows how to holler when it is called for, hope that knows how to sing when there seems little cause, hope that raises us from the dead—not someday but this day, every day, again and again and again. **Amen.** —*Jan Richardson*

*Celebrant* On this first day of the year, we gather up our prayers and offer them to you, O Lord, knowing full well that there are signs in the sun and moon and stars and in the common events of ordinary life that call us to attend to your coming. Prepare us for the time of trial and for your dominion, coming now and at the close of this age. **Amen.**

## **The Confession**

*The Celebrant says*            Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Silence may be kept. The people may stand or kneel.*

*Celebrant and People say together*

**Most merciful God,  
we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us;  
that we may delight in your will,  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

*The Celebrant says*

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

## **The Peace**

*Celebrant*            The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People*                **And also with you.**

# + THE HOLY COMMUNION +

*Celebrant says an Offertory sentence, the congregation may be seated.*

Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name; bring offerings and come into his courts.

## Offertory Anthem

Alan Hovhaness (1911–2000)

*Watchmen, tell us of the night*

Watchman, tell us of the night,  
what its signs of promise are.  
Traveler, o'er yon mountain's height,  
see that glory-beaming star.  
Watchman, does its beauteous ray  
aught of joy or hope foretell?  
Traveler, yes; it brings the day,  
promised day of Israel.

Watchman, tell us of the night;  
higher yet that star ascends.  
Traveler, blessedness and light,  
peace and truth its course portends.  
Watchman, will its beams alone  
gild the spot that gave them birth?  
Traveler, ages are its own;  
see, it bursts o'er all the earth.

Watchman, tell us of the night,  
for the morning seems to dawn.  
Traveler, darkness takes its flight,  
doubt and terror are withdrawn.  
Watchman, let thy wanderings cease;  
hie thee to thy quiet home.  
Traveler, lo! the Prince of Peace,  
lo! the Son of God is come!

Whether you've joined us today from near or far, in person or online, please consider making a gift of thanksgiving to support the work of God at St. Matthew's. Be part of God's mission with us as we make our way into the new life God promises.

Visit [www.stmatthewswilton.org/offering](http://www.stmatthewswilton.org/offering). Designate it as a gift or as part of your pledge.

No gift is too small. All gifts honor the God who honors us with life, breath, love, and salvation.



Please stand as you are able.

## Hymn at the Presentation

## NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND

Sav-ior of the na-tions, come! Vir-gin's son, make here your home.  
Mar-vel, now, both heav'n and earth, that the Lord chose such a birth.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

## The Great Thanksgiving

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

*People* **We lift them to the Lord.**

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People* **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:



# Sanctus

*Sung by all*

*setting by William Bradley Roberts (b. 1955)*

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,  
God of pow - er and, might. \_\_\_\_\_ Heaven and  
earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the  
high - est. \_\_\_\_\_ Blessed is the one who comes in the  
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est. \_\_\_\_\_

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son.

For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,  
*Celebrant and People*

**We remember his death,  
We proclaim his resurrection,  
We await his coming in glory;**

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with [\_\_\_\_\_and] all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

*Celebrant and People*

**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, and the power, and the glory,**

**for ever and ever. Amen.**

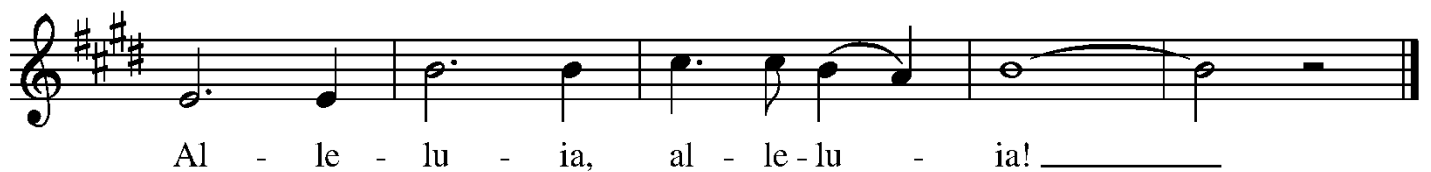
## The Breaking of the Bread

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.*

### Fraction Anthem

*Sung by all*

*setting by William Bradley Roberts (b. 1955)*



*Celebrant*

The gifts of God for the People of God.

*All are welcome to come forward, as directed by ushers, to receive communion or a blessing. Please wait for the Ushers and follow their instructions. When you reach the center of the space, please open your hands and lay them flat to receive the bread or cross your arms over your chest to receive a blessing. You may then choose to drink from the silver chalice to your left or intinct (dip the wafer in the wine) in the clay chalice to your right. If you do not wish to receive wine, simply pass the cup, and make your way back to your seat. We believe Jesus is fully present in both the bread and the wine, so if you receive the bread, you have participated fully in communion. Let the Priest know if you need a gluten free wafer by first extending your palms down. If you would like to have communion brought to your pew, please let an Usher know.*

## **Communion Anthem**

George Guest (1924–2002)

*In night's dim shadows lying*

In night's dim shadows lying,  
Our limbs fast lock'd in sleep,  
to thee, with faithful sighing,  
Our souls their vigil keep.

Desire of every nation,  
Hear, Lord, our piteous cry;  
Thou Word, the world's salvation,  
Uplift us where we lie.

Lord, be thine Advent hasten'd,  
Lest sin thy people mar;  
The gates which Adam fasten'd —  
The gates of heav'n, unbar.

Son, to thine endless merit,  
Redeemer, Saviour, Friend,  
With Sire and Holy Spirit  
Be praises without end. Amen.

*All sing the following hymn, either sitting or kneeling:*

## Communion Hymn 73

ST. STEPHEN

“The King shall come when morning dawns”

*If you are joining from home or have not received communion, you may offer this prayer to the Lord.*

### **The Act of Reception**

Saint Augustine’s Prayer Book (2<sup>nd</sup> ed)

*The Celebrant and the People say together*

In union, Blessed Jesus, with the faithful gathered at every altar of your Church where your blessed Body and Blood are offered this day, I long to offer you praise and thanksgiving, for creation and all the blessings of this life, for the redemption won for us by your life, death, and resurrection, for the means of grace and the hope of glory.

I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament, and, since I cannot at this time receive communion, I pray you to come into my heart. I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart, my soul, and my mind. Let nothing separate me from you; let me serve you in this life until, by your grace, I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace.

Come Lord Jesus, and dwell in my heart in the fullness of your strength; be my wisdom and guide me in right pathways; conform my life and actions to the image of your holiness; and, in the power of your gracious might, rule over every hostile power that threatens or disturbs the growth of your kingdom, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

*The People stand or kneel.*

## **The Postcommunion Prayer**

*Celebrant*

Let us pray.

*People*

**Eternal God, heavenly Father,  
you have graciously accepted us as living members  
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,  
and you have fed us with spiritual food  
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.  
Send us now into the world in peace,  
and grant us strength and courage  
to love and serve you  
with gladness and singleness of heart;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## Parish Announcements

### The Blessing

*The Celebrant blesses the People*

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you, scatter the darkness from before your path, and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory; and the blessing of our God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, be with you this day and evermore. **Amen.**

### Recessional Hymn 59

MERTON

“Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding”

*The Celebrant offers the dismissal,*

*Celebrant* Our Lord says, ‘I am coming soon.’

*People* **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

*Celebrant* May the Lord, when he comes, find us watching and waiting.

*People* **Amen.**

### Postlude

Brenda Portman (b. 1980)

Fanfare-Toccata on “*Sleepers, wake!*” *A voice astounds us*

## **Worship Leaders**

*Celebrant & Preacher*

The Rev. Marissa Rohrbach

*Eucharistic Ministers*

Bill Brautigam, Sharon Pearson

*Lectors*

Chris Perry, Lorena Morales Aparicio

*Intercessor*

John Pearson

*Music Director*

Andrew Leslie Cooper

*Choir*

St. Matthew's Church Choir

*Altar Guild*

Nancy Brautigam, Char Griffin, Lorena Morales Aparicio

*Counters*

Bill Brautigam, Chris Perry

**Prayer Requests** *Specific prayer requests will be kept on the prayer list for six weeks. Please call or email the office if you have additions or deletions to the prayer list. You are encouraged to offer your own prayers silently or aloud as indicated in the Prayers of the People.*

Today and through the week, we remember all those who have been commended to our prayers. For those who are sick or in need: *Thomas, Diana, James, Carol, Susan, Lee, Arlene, Barbara, Mike, Jack, Chuck, David, Joan, Liz, Ann, Jack, Pat, Kathy, Dick, Scott, Martin, Ann, Melinda, Aaron, Dann and Presiding Bishop Michael Curry. For those serving in the military, Matthew Comeau.*

In the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer, we pray for Christ Church, Ansonia; St. Paul's, Bantam, Christ Church, Bethany. Postulants and candidates for Holy Orders; the Commission on Ministry and its members.

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## **Christmas Memorials and Thanksgivings**



At this time of year, it's our custom to give gifts in memory of or in thanksgiving for the people we love. If you would like to make a donation for Christmas flowers, music memorials or the Rector's Discretionary Fund, please be in touch with Nancy in the Parish Office at [office@stmatthewswilton.org](mailto:office@stmatthewswilton.org) or online at [www.stmatthewswilton.org/memorials](http://www.stmatthewswilton.org/memorials).

**Please respond by Friday, 12/15 with names to be included in the Christmas Eve bulletins.**

**Carols, Cocoa,  
and Candy Canes**

*A festive singalong of holiday  
favorites for little ones*

at St. Matthew's Church  
36 New Canaan Rd, Wilton

Saturday, Dec. 9, 10am

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## **Pledges & Pancakes – Next Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>**

On Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, we'll revive the beloved tradition of "Pledges and Pancakes". Come a little early to church and eat some pancakes between 9am and 10am. (With an extra early start for the choir!) These aren't just any pancakes, they're special, grateful pancakes - made with love and in thanksgiving for your pledges for 2024.



And we'll have a special intergenerational and family activity that morning. **Everyone is welcome** to come and make a Christmas Peace Candle. Come prepare to share some light, eat pancakes, have some fun, and help us share the light of Christ in the Advent season and beyond. It's time for a little light and laughter, for joy, for hope.

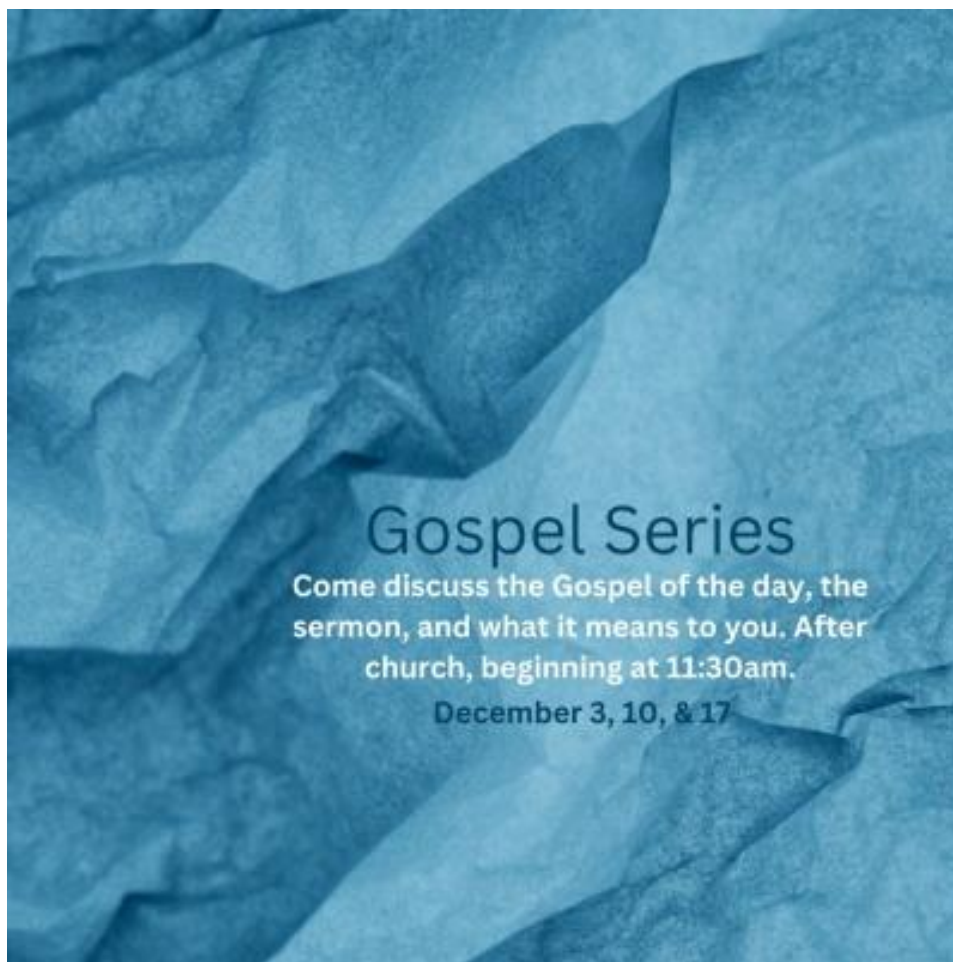
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## **Food Providers Needed for our Manna House Ministry**

St. Matthew's has been supporting the Manna House soup kitchen in Norwalk for over 25 years by providing a meal once every other month (except the summer). This ministry helps to feed some 250 people. It is a small commitment...dropping off an ingredient at St. Matts just 5 times a year. The ingredients include such things as some kielbasa, grated cheese, milk, lettuce, cookies or fresh veggies. This means a lot to these people who have such great needs. Please contact Linda Gortz ([lindagortz@gmail.com](mailto:lindagortz@gmail.com)) or Dodo Roberts ([dodo.robert1@gmail.com](mailto:dodo.robert1@gmail.com)) for more info and to volunteer. Many hands make light work and a warm heart.



## Advent Gospel Series – Sundays December 3, 10, & 17



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### A Special Advent III – Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>

On the third Sunday of Advent, December 17<sup>th</sup>, we'll have a special day to celebrate! Our Pageant will take place during worship. And after church, to help celebrate our kids, we'll share a festive Christmas celebration with WPC and the animals are coming to give us a sense of a live nativity!

Come hear the greatest story, told in costume and little voices by the wonderful children of the parish. Then stay. Drink something warm and walk around seeing all the animals in the courtyard and celebrating the coming of Christmas with our Presbyterian neighbors. It will be a beautiful, festive day! Pageant, Hot Chocolate, and Live Nativity - oh my!



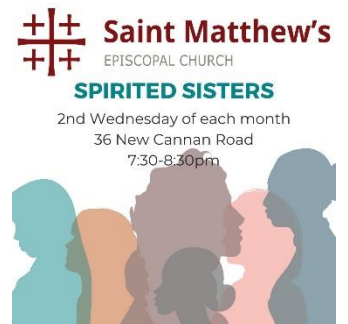
## Holiday Gifts for Open Doors

We have a few opportunities to support our Mission Partners this holiday season. We hope you'll help as you can! Open Doors has asked for wallets for men and women as well as back packs, pocketbooks and duffle bags (for adults). A bin will be set up in the Narthex for collection starting now thru Dec. 10th. A Sign-Up Genius is included in our weekly e-news or use the sign-up sheet in the narthex. Any questions, please contact Char Griffin or George Fuller. Thank you!

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## St. Matt's Spirited Sisters

Join us for our next monthly meeting of the St. Matt's Spirited Sisters on **Wednesday, December 13th at 7:30pm in the Upper Core**. We are so excited to share the format of our next meeting! We will be doing a Christmas craft incorporating felting. Have you heard of it? Felting is an ancient craft that produces a textile or fabric by combining and compressing loose fibers or yarn. We will show you how to sculpt wool into Christmas ornaments using a special felting needle. Please bring your tools if you have them and RSVP to Stacey at [staceysavas@optonline.net](mailto:staceysavas@optonline.net) so we have a head count. Also, feel free to bring some Christmas treats to share with the group. As always, you are welcome to bring friends to this gathering.



Please save **Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>** for our first meeting in 2024.

We are a community of faith for the women of St Matthew's that explores and strengthens our Christian ideals and knowledge, fostering friendship, offering prayer and support for each other, and building a deeper relationship with Christ. We meet monthly to discuss topics of faith by listening to podcasts, reading articles, taking field trips, doing hands-on activities, and learning from each other. We welcome all the women of St. Matthew's and their friends. Discussion materials will be available prior to meeting but advanced prep work is not required. Contact Pam Carlson or Stacey Savas with any questions.

## Holiday Wreath Sale

The Boy Scouts of Wilton Troop 125, sponsored in town by St. Matthew's for ~60 years, will be holding their annual holiday wreath sale beginning this weekend. They will join us after services on Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> in the courtyard for wreath and garland sales on-site or you can place your order for the scouts to deliver to your home. If you miss them after church on Sunday, they also have store sales at Orem's and the Village Market for the next two weekends. We have had a great partnership with the scouts for decades and you see them regularly come out to support our Fall and Spring WEPCO Clean Up Days, Rise Against Hunger and many other ways that the scouts support our churches with hundreds of community service hours annually. This is their sole fundraiser of the year so we hope you will support their efforts and brighten up your own holiday decorations. If you don't need a wreath, but would like to support the scouts, they will also accept donations as part of the *Wreaths Across America* program which helps them to provide wreaths at the Veterans' Memorial in Wilton Center as well as at service gravesites at Hillside Cemetery. Thanks for your help.

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Shop Local

**ELFIN GOOD**

LUXE POP UP  
SHOPPE

WEPCO  
48 New Canaan Rd Wilton CT

DECEMBER

SATURDAY | **16** | 3PM-7PM

2023

Handmade with Love  
Artisan  
Art  
Eco-Friendly  
Womenswear | Menswear  
Beauty  
Home

# Step Up for St. Matthew's

2023 Pledges

All of us are called to give to support our community of faith and the needs of the saints. If each of us does our best, discerning with God the best we can give, we will have what we need.

Is it possible for you, this year, to take a step up?



## Frequently Asked Questions About Pledging

### What is a pledge?

A pledge is a financial promise to support our parish and its missions in the coming year. Your pledge is an act of faith that connects you more deeply to our church. Many find spiritual joy in making a generous pledge to support God's work through the church. While pledges guide our budget for the year, they can be adjusted, up or down, if your circumstances change.

### Why is it important to pledge?

Scripture is clear on many occasions about the teachings of Jesus and others, including St. Paul, that God expects us to give back to our community faith and to God out of gratitude. The Episcopal Church also sees a pledge as an important part of membership. No matter the size of this gift, your pledge is a sacred gift to be discerned with God.

Whether it's \$10, \$100, \$5,000 or \$50,000, we give thanks for the best you and God can put forward this year.

### Don't we have an endowment?

We are blessed to have an endowment fund that supports a portion of our annual budget and our mission efforts. As good stewards, we strive to preserve the principal for future needs or emergencies and use only a small draw (4% of average principal) each year to offset a portion of our annual expenses.

### Don't we get money from the Diocese?

It's actually the other way around! Episcopal churches raise most of their operating funds from members. Unlike some churches, we are not funded from the top down. Your pledges or gifts go directly to our parish, and we are then charged an annual assessment to support the larger church at the diocesan (state) and national levels.

### What's the difference between a gift and a pledge?

A pledge indicates your commitment to the parish, your intention to support the mission of God in the year ahead. Gifts are always welcome and appreciated and God delights in them, however, they don't allow us to plan responsibly or to look ahead. Pledges help us to plan responsibly for God's mission and your care.

Don't see your question here? Email [finance@stmatthewswilton.org](mailto:finance@stmatthewswilton.org)

# the arts AT S T. M A T T H E W ' S

## UPCOMING CONCERTS

Friday, Jan 19, 2024, 7:30 PM: Michelle Pauker | American Songbook

Friday, Feb 02, 2024, 7:30 PM: Westminster Choir

Friday, Mar 22, 2024, 7:30 PM: Hildegard, Bach, and Pärt (free)

Friday, Apr 05, 2024, 7:30 PM: Chhandayan | Holi Festival of Colors

Saturday, May 18, 2024, 7:30 PM: La Fiocco

Saturday, Jun 08, 2024, 7:30 PM: Grand Finale — The Bach Family

Tickets and subscriptions available at  
[www.stmatthewswilton.org/aasm-tickets](http://www.stmatthewswilton.org/aasm-tickets)





# Christmas Eve

December 24th  
Advent IV at 10am

Musical Prelude begins at 3:30pm

Christmas Eve Family Service at 4pm

Musical Prelude begins at 8:30pm

Christmas Eve Candle Light Service at 9pm



**Saint Matthew's**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

## Weekly Calendar – December 3 – December 10

Sunday, **December 3**

10:00am

11:30am

**The First Sunday of Advent**

Holy Eucharist – Rite II

Advent Gospel Series

Monday, **December 4**

7:00pm

EFM (virtual)

Tuesday, **December 5**

11:00am

Staff meeting

Wednesday, **December 6**

7:30-9:00pm

Social Justice & Racial Healing group (virtual)

Thursday, **December 7**

7:30-9:00pm

St. Matthew's Church Choir rehearsal

Saturday, **December 9**

10:00-11:00am

Carols, Cocoa, and Candy Canes – family sing along

Sunday, **December 10**

8:30-10:00am

10:00am

11:30am

11:30-1:00pm

**The Second Sunday of Advent**

Pancakes & Pledges

Holy Eucharist – Rite II

Advent Gospel Series

Confirmation Class

**Connection details available on our website, in the e-news,  
and in our Parishioner Facebook group.**

Need to sign up for the e-news? It's easy – just go to [www.stmatthewswilton.org/newsletter](http://www.stmatthewswilton.org/newsletter).

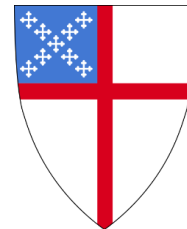
Need to join the Parishioner Facebook Group? Go here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/StMatthewsOnline/>

Need something else? Send Marissa a note or be in touch with another member of the staff.

# Worship Schedule at St. Matthew's

Holy Eucharist on Sundays at 10am



*Please keep an eye on our website and social media as well as our e-news. There you'll find information and opportunities to connect for friends and members of all ages.*

## **Staff**

Rector	The Rev. Marissa S. Rohrbach, <a href="mailto:marissa@stmatthewswilton.org">marissa@stmatthewswilton.org</a>
Music Ministries & Organist	Andrew Leslie Cooper, <a href="mailto:andrew@stmatthewswilton.org">andrew@stmatthewswilton.org</a>
Parish Administrator	Nancy Johnson, <a href="mailto:office@stmatthewswilton.org">office@stmatthewswilton.org</a>
Director of WEPCO	Donna Savage, <a href="mailto:wepco@optonline.net">wepco@optonline.net</a>
Bookkeeper	Louann Miska, <a href="mailto:louann.miska@gmail.com">louann.miska@gmail.com</a>
Media Technician	Matthew Henshaw
Nursery Staff	Lucia Sato
Sexton	Alix Williams, Jairo Mejia

## **Wardens and Officers**

Warden	Pam Ely	Clerk	Jennifer DeAngelis
Warden	Anne Newton	Asst. Treasurer	Brian Angerame
Treasurer	Rob Kyle		

## **The Vestry**

Eleanor Arnold	Amy Gubner	Endy Perry
Beth Baker	Vytas Kisielius	Paul Reis
Pam Carlson		

36 New Canaan Road, Wilton, CT 06897

Phone: (203) 762-7400

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