

December 14, 2025
The Third Sunday of Advent ~ *Gaudete* Sunday
Commitment Sunday
10:30 a.m.: Festival of Lessons and Carols
with Children's Chapel



St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church

Seeking God • Building Community • Growing Faith • Reaching Out
5450 Massachusetts Avenue, Bethesda, MD 20816
301.229.2994

StDunstansBethesda.org

The Reverend Patricia Phaneuf Alexander, *Rector* rector@stdunstansbethesda.org
The Reverend Jessica Ault, *Deacon* deacon@stdunstansbethesda.org
The Rev. Emily Elder, *Sunday Assistant* eelder@w-e-s.org
Ms. Diane Atherton, *Minister of Music* music@stdunstansbethesda.org
Mr. Ulysses Squitieri, *Organist* organist@stdunstansbethesda.org
Ms. Cami Caudill, *Seminarian* ccaudill@vts.edu
Ms. Jenna Monroe, *Children's Minister* familyministry@stdunstansbethesda.org
Ms. Elisabeth Saidi, *Parish Administrator* admin@stdunstansbethesda.org
Mr. Rick Loucks, *Facilities Maintenance Coordinator* facilities@stdunstansbethesda.org
Lila and Sany Saidi, *Sunday Morning Childcare Providers*

Welcome to St. Dunstan's

Thank you for choosing to worship with St. Dunstan's this morning! We are a community of seekers doing our best to live authentically and faithfully in this challenging and complicated world, and we are delighted that you are sharing the journey with us today.

Children are *always* welcome here; please make yourself and your family at home. There are coloring sheets on the round table between the glass doors, as well as books and soft toys at the back of the church. Rest assured: We are delighted by the “joyful noise” that children inevitably make, *and* don't worry if you feel you need to take your child out of the service for a few minutes.



Babysitting for children **4 and under** is provided **downstairs in the Nursery**. For everyone's safety, **registration is required**: Please scan the QR code to the left to sign up.

To learn more about offerings for children and families, please share your contact information on the clipboard on the Welcome Table.

Restrooms are located in the hallway by the glass doors.

If you find the wooden pews uncomfortable, feel free to borrow a **cushion** from the rear of the Nave for use during worship.

Please wear a **name tag**! Permanent name tags are on the board in the entry hall. If you don't yet have a permanent tag, please use a stick-on badge until we can make you an official one.

Unless otherwise noted, music for this morning's **hymns** may be found in the blue *Hymnal 1982* or the red and black *Lift Every Voice and Sing* in your pew rack.



Gaudete Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent, takes its name from the Latin word *Gaudete*, which means “rejoice.” It is often symbolized by a pink or rose color, hence the traditional pink candle in Advent wreaths. The readings for this day are characterized by joy and expectancy, as we look towards the celebration of our Lord's Nativity.

About Advent Lessons and Carols

The Festival of Lessons and Carols as we know it dates to December 1918, at King's College, Cambridge, in the days immediately following the end of World War I. The Rev. Eric Milner-White, Dean of the College, reflected on his experiences as a British army chaplain and developed this liturgy as an opportunity to remember God's great promises, even in the midst of so much suffering and untold devastation. The lessons speak of God's great plan of salvation, articulated by Israel's prophets and poets and realized in the birth of Jesus Christ.

In keeping with the contemplative tone of Advent, please observe quiet in the Nave before the service to enable everyone to pray and prepare for worship.



Festival of Lessons and Carols

Introit

Creator of the stars of night

Text: Latin, 9th c.

Music: *Conditor alme siderum*, plainsong, Mode 4
St. Dunstan's Chancel Choir

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Officiant Today we light the first, second, and third candles of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE, the second candle is PEACE, and the third candle is JOY.

The candles are lit.

Reader You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands (*Isaiah 55:12*).

Officiant Let us pray: Gracious God, you came to us in human flesh and you abide with us in the Holy Spirit. Fill us with your joy, and help us shine as a light to the world. Through Jesus Christ, who makes our joy complete, **Amen.**

Please stand, as you are able, and join in singing.

Processional Hymn

“O come, O come, Emmanuel, vv. 1-4”

Music: *Hymnal*, 56

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
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!

O come, thou Wisdom from on high,
who orderest all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show,
and teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times didst give the law,
in cloud, and majesty, and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, thou Branch of Jesse's tree,
free them from Satan's tyranny
that trust thy mighty power to save,
and give them victory o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel!

The Advent Bidding Prayer

Officiant

Dear People of God: In the season of Advent, it is our responsibility and joy to prepare ourselves to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us look forward to the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in this city.

And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore.

And now, to gather up all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying:

Officiant 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.**

Officiant

The Almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of Angels bring us all, **Amen.**

Please be seated. Children are invited to attend Children's Chapel in the Youth Room.

The First Lesson • Genesis 2:4b-9,15-25

Read by Sue Carroll

God creates man and woman to live in obedience in the Garden of Eden.

In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no vegetation of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground, but a stream would rise from the earth and water the whole face of the ground— then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.” So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle and to the birds of the air and to every animal of the field, but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
this one shall be called Woman,
for out of Man this one was taken.”

Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

Here ends the Lesson.

Carol

Adam Lay Ybounden

Text: 15th c. medieval carol
arr. C. Cooman (b. 1982)

Heather Fetrow, *soprano* Charles Humphries, *alto*
Zhihui Pang, *tenor* Antony Zwerdling, *baritone*

The Second Lesson • Isaiah 40:1-11

Read by Cami Caudill

God comforts his people and calls on them to prepare for redemption.

Comfort, O comfort my people,
 says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
 and cry to her
that she has served her term,
 that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the Lord's hand
 double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
 make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,
 and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
 and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
 and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out!"

And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All people are grass,
 their constancy is like the flower of the field.

The grass withers, the flower fades,
 when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

The grass withers, the flower fades;
 but the word of our God will stand forever.

Get you up to a high mountain,
 O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
 O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,

continued

lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
See, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Here ends the Lesson.

Please stand and join in singing.

Hymn

"Comfort, comfort ye my people"

Hymnal, 67

Comfort, comfort ye my people,
speak ye peace, thus saith our God;
comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning 'neath their sorrows' load.

Speak ye to Jerusalem
of the peace that waits for them;
tell her that her sins I cover,
and her warfare now is over.

Hark, the voice of one that crieth
in the desert far and near,
calling us to new repentance
since the kingdom now is here.

Oh, that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way;
let the valleys rise to meet him
and the hills bow down to greet him.

Make ye straight what long was crooked,
make the rougher places plain;
let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits his holy reign.

For the glory of the Lord
now o'er earth is shed abroad;
and all flesh shall see the token
that the word is never broken.

Please be seated.

The Third Lesson • Jeremiah 31:31-34

Read by Fred Atwood

A new covenant is promised which will be written in our hearts.

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt – a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Here ends the Lesson.

Carol

Thy hand, O God, has guided

Text: E. H. Plumptre
Music: B. Harwood

St. Dunstan's Chancel Choir

The Fourth Lesson • Isaiah 35:1-10

Read by Michelle Mesen

The prophet proclaims that God will come and save us.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.
Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.

continued

Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
 “Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
 He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
 He will come and save you.”
Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
 and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
 and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
 and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool
 and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
 the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
A highway shall be there,
 and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
 but it shall be for God’s people;
 no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
 nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
 but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
 and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
 they shall obtain joy and gladness,
 and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.
Here ends the Lesson.

Carol

There is No Rose of Such Virtue

St. Dunstan’s Chancel Choir

J. Joubert (1927-2019)

The Fifth Lesson • Micah 5:2-4

Read by Walter Douglas

The one who is to rule Israel will be born in the village of Bethlehem.

You, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth

Here ends the Lesson.

Carol

Thou Shalt Know Him When He Comes

M. Sirrett (b. 1952)

Diane Atherton, *soprano* Heather Fetrow, *soprano* Charles Humphries, *alto*
Zhihui Pang, *tenor* Antony Zwerdling, *baritone*

The Sixth Lesson • Isaiah 7:10-15

Read by Teresa Lee

God promises that a child shall be conceived who will be known as "God with us."

The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good."

Here ends the Lesson.

Carol

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, from Messiah

G.F. Handel

St. Dunstan's Chancel Choir
Charles Humphries, *alto solo*

The Seventh Lesson • Zephaniah 3:14-18

Read by Deacon Jessica Ault

The Lord will be among us; we are summoned to rejoice and sing.

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
The Lord has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.
On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.
The Lord, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing
as on a day of festival.
I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.

Here ends the Lesson.

Please stand and join in singing.

Hymn

“Rejoice! Rejoice, believers”

Music: *Hymnal*, 68

Rejoice! rejoice, believers,
and let your lights appear!
The evening is advancing,
and darker night is near.
The Bridegroom is arising,
and soon he will draw nigh;
up, watch in expectation!
at midnight comes the cry.
See that your lamps are burning,
replenish them with oil;
look now for your salvation,

the end of sin and toil.
The marriage-feast is waiting,
the gates wide open stand;
rise up, ye heirs of glory,
the Bridegroom is at hand!

Our hope and expectation,
O Jesus, now appear;
arise, thou Sun so longed for,
above this darkened sphere!
With hearts and hands uplifted,
we plead, O Lord, to see
the day of earth's redemption,
and ever be with thee!

Please be seated.

The Eighth Lesson • Isaiah 65:17-25

Read by Carmen Petruzzi

God promises a new heaven and a new earth.

I am about to create new heavens
and a new earth;
the former things shall not be remembered
or come to mind.
But be glad and rejoice forever
in what I am creating,
for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy
and its people as a delight.
I will rejoice in Jerusalem
and delight in my people;
no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it
or the cry of distress.
No more shall there be in it
an infant who lives but a few days
or an old person who does not live out a lifetime,
for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth,
and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed.
They shall build houses and inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
They shall not build and another inhabit;
they shall not plant and another eat,

continued

for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be,
and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.
They shall not labor in vain
or bear children for calamity,
for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord—
and their descendants as well.
Before they call I will answer,
while they are yet speaking I will hear.
The wolf and the lamb shall feed together;
the lion shall eat straw like the ox,
but the serpent—its food shall be dust!
They shall not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
says the Lord.
Here ends the Lesson.

Please stand and join in singing.

Hymn

“Hark! the glad sound! the Savior comes”

Hymnal, 72

*The text of this hymn is still under copyright;
please use the blue Hymnal 1982, found in your pew rack.*

Please be seated.

The Ninth Lesson • Luke 1:26-56

Read by The Rev. Patricia Alexander

*The Angel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary
that she will bear the Son of the Most High.*

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be

holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

Here ends the Lesson.

Carol at the Offertory

Gabriel's Message

Basque Carol
arr. E. Pittman

St. Dunstan's Chancel Choir

Thank you for supporting the mission and ministry of St. Dunstan's! If you would like to make an offering this morning, you may place it in the Offertory bag as it is passed or visit StDunstansBethesda.org and click "Give." You also may mail your check to the Parish Office.

Completed Stewardship Drive Pledge Cards also may be placed in the Offertory bag (in an envelope, for privacy).

Please stand, as you are able.

<i>Officiant</i>	All things come from you, O Lord;
<i>People</i>	And from Your own gifts do we give You, Amen.

Collect for the Third Sunday of Advent

Officiant

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever, **Amen.**

Collect for Commitment Sunday

Officiant

Generous and loving God, we come to you in thanksgiving, knowing that all we are and all that we have is a gift from you. In faith and love, help us to do your will. We are listening. Speak your words into the depth of our souls, that we may hear you clearly.

We offer to you this day all the facets of our lives, whether it be at home, at work, or at school. We seek to be patient, to be merciful, to be generous, to be holy. Give us the wisdom and insight to understand your will for us and the fervor to carry out our good intentions.

We offer our gifts of time, talent and possessions to you as a true act of faith, to reflect our love for you and our neighbors. Help us to reach out to others as you have reached out to us, **Amen.**

Prayers of Petition, Intercession, and Thanksgiving

Officiant

Let us now pray for our own needs and the needs of others.

For those who have been commended to our Parish Prayer List (*see p. 18*), as well as those we now name, either silently or out loud:

Pause for prayers of petition or intercession

For all who have died, remembering especially *Andrew Engleward, Mary Jane Hellekjaer, the victims of the shooting at Brown University*, and those whom we name now, silently or aloud:

Pause for prayers for the departed

For all the blessings of this life, including the ordination yesterday of *The Rev. Emily Elder*, and those other god things that we name now, silently or aloud:

Pause for prayers of thanksgiving

Officiant

Teach us, O God, to rejoice in you always, that your peace may guard our hearts and our minds, **Amen.**

The Advent Blessing

Officiant

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin, **Amen.**

May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await,
make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love,
Amen.

May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his
second Advent be rewarded with unending life, **Amen.**

And may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the
Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you – and all those you
love – always, **Amen.**

Remaining standing, please join in singing the closing hymn.

Closing Hymn

“Lo! he comes, with clouds descending”

Music: *Hymnal*, 57

Lo! he comes, with clouds descending,
once for our salvation slain;
thousand thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ the Lord returns to reign.
Every eye shall now behold him,
robed in dreadful majesty;
those who set at nought and sold him,
pierced, and nailed him to the tree,
deeply wailing, deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
shall the true Messiah see.

Those dear tokens of his passion
still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation
to his ransomed worshipers;
with what rapture, with what rapture, with what rapture
gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, amen! let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the power and glory;
claim the kingdom for thine own:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

Please be seated following the hymn.

Announcements (*see pp. 18-21*)

Choral Dismissal

Vesper Responsory

G. P. da Palestrina (1525 -1594)

St. Dunstan's Chancel Choir

Postlude

Ulysses Squitieri, *organ*

+++

Please remember in prayer:

Julie Anderson; Elida Bessalel; Jeff Boesch; Rebecca Bryant;
Phil and Patti Carroll; Steve Cooper; Austin Cox; Henry Cox; Donna Embry;
Kenny Farnsworth; Katie Beck Fey; Bishop Clark Grew; Ben Hull; David Hull;
Debbie Kirk; Frank Libutti; Patricia Mackenzie; Rick Nickles; Joyce Nugent;
Daniel Phaneuf; Linda Rogers; Shannon Rose; Barbara Sander; Curtis Shively;
Jalene Spain Thomas; Jack Tovornik; Ellie Tupper; Peggy Vaughn;
Sandra Walters; Jim Ward; Ben; Bill; Christopher; David; Gerald; Henry; JW;
Karen; Katherine; Marty; Melanie; Phyllis; Sherry; *and* Shiloh

+++

Announcements

Today at St. Dunstan's:

- + **Welcome, Visitors!** We are delighted that you are here, and we hope you can stay for a few minutes after worship so that we can greet you properly. To learn more about St. Dunstan's, please fill out a **visitor form**, found on the table in the entry hall, and help yourself to a **welcome bag** as a token of our gratitude that you have joined us today.
- + **Today is Commitment Sunday:** If you have not yet made a financial pledge for 2026, we hope that you will consider doing so today, so that our Treasurer and Vestry can start building the parish budget. You may place your confidential pledge card (in an envelope) in the Offertory collection or hand it to **the Rector** or one of our **Stewardship Co-Chairs** (**Karen Edwards, Carmen Petruzzi, or Rosi Sweeney**) after worship; you also may pledge online at stdunstansbethesda.org/support/stewardship.html. Extra copies of the Stewardship materials are on the table in Founders' Hall.
- + **Fellowship Time:** Please stay for a cup of coffee or tea and a snack in the **Parish Hall** following the service!

- + **Hospitality Committee:** Your help is needed! We are starting a **Hospitality Committee** to coordinate food and drink for our weekly Fellowship Time and occasional receptions. Too often too much of the work falls to too few. Can you please lend a hand? Hospitality is an essential part of our ministry as a parish. Please join **Nancy Douglas** in the **Parlor** after worship for an organizational meeting. Thank you, in advance!
- + **Children's Choir Rehearsal:** All children ages 4-12 are invited to sing with **Miss Diane** from **12–1 p.m.** in the **Music Room**.
- + **Carols and Cocoa:** Come and spread some holiday cheer! Don your Santa hat and/or your favorite holiday sweater, grab a cozy cup of cocoa and shortbread, and prepare to make a joyful noise! Join St Dunstan's musicians Diane Atherton and Ulysses Squitieri at **5 p.m. in the Parish Hall** for a fun, informal Christmas carol sing. Carolers of all ages and abilities are welcome! We'll sing for an hour or so and then will carpool to Brighton Gardens Senior Living Facility to share some Christmas cheer with the residents there.
- + **Reminder: The Festive Christmas Auction CLOSSES at 9 p.m.!** St. Dunstan's annual online auction is wrapping up this evening...Don't miss out! Find unique Christmas gifts while supporting the mission and ministries of this parish.

The Week Ahead:

- + **Tuesday, December 16:**
 - **6:45 p.m.: Advent Compline (Zoom).**
Compline will begin 15 minutes earlier this week only due to the 7 p.m. Vestry meeting.
 - **7 p.m.: Monthly Vestry Meeting (Zoom).** Please hold your lay leadership in prayer as they deliberate about St. Dunstan's operating budget for 2026. We remain hopeful that we will be able to maintain (or, God willing, expand) our current staffing and ministries in the coming year.
- + **Wednesday, December 17:**
 - **10:30 a.m.: Midweek Bible Study (Zoom).** All are welcome to participate in our discussion of the **Gospel of Luke**.



continued

- **7 p.m.: Blue Christmas Service, with Communion** (*Washington National Cathedral*). At a time of year when so many experience feelings of grief, loss, and hardship, Washington National Cathedral's annual Blue Christmas Service invites us into hope and healing through prayer, music, and reflection.



+ **Next Sunday, December 21:**

- **10:30 a.m.: Instructed Eucharist** (*Nave*). As we do periodically, next week we will offer a "teaching" service, in which we will pause periodically to explain what we are doing and why; this narration takes the place of the traditional sermon. This is a great opportunity for the whole congregation to understand the liturgy more deeply. It also is a wonderful chance for members of all ages to take leadership roles in worship. Please plan to participate!
- **12 Noon: Christmas Pageant Rehearsal** (*Nave*). Children of all ages (newborns to 110...) are invited and encouraged to sign up to take part in the **Christmas Pageant**, which this year will be held on **December 24 at 3 p.m.** There is a role for everyone! Next Sunday's rehearsal is **mandatory** for all participants and will be followed by a **pizza lunch**. **Please sign up using the button in the online newsletter.**
- **5 p.m.: Deadline for Christmas Flower and Music Dedications.** Please consider a donation to help offset the cost of our **Christmas flowers** and/or the **special music at our Christmas Eve Concert and Festival Eucharist**. In order for your dedications to be printed in our Christmas bulletins, **please complete the form in the online newsletter by Sunday at 5 p.m.** We are grateful for contributions of *any* amount. Thank you so much!



Stewardship 2026: With Glad and Generous Hearts

The Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of St. Dunstan's joyfully thank all those who have pledged to the 2026 Stewardship Drive (as of 12/12/25):

Diane Adams
The Rev. Patricia Phaneuf Alexander*
Donna Alvarez
Fred Atwood*
Thomas Barnett
Elin Botha
Leo Bouma*
Sue Carroll and Ray Donnelly
Jane Chase
Ray Ciesinski and Phoebe Eliopoulos
Christina Clark and
Graham Rehrig
Steve and Susie Cooper
Nancy and Walter Douglas*
Karen Edwards
Ana Maria Espinoza and
Mark MacCarthy
Danette Gentile Kauffman

Alicia and Farid Khadduri
Alex Lane and Fielder Valone
Lynne Adduci Leonard
Vince Leonard*
Lisa and Norman Martin
Doug McManus* and Pam Ostuw
Brad and Margaret Mellor
Michelle Mesen*
Bahram Nowzad
Kristalee and Nils Overdahl*
Claire Owen
Carmen Petruzzini
Cary and Ron Poropatich
David and Janet Repka*
Fred and Louise Smoak
Rosi Sweeney
Marta and Pat Waldo
Cliff and Debbie White

To date we have received **34** financial commitments totaling **\$230,900** for the 2026 calendar year - which means that we are about **66%** of the way toward our goal of \$350,000. Please hold this year's Stewardship Drive in your prayers – and please prayerfully consider pledging if you have not done so already. We depend on parishioner contributions to fund the staff and programming of this parish.

* = *Vestry Members and Executive Committee*
*Names in **bold** = New pledgers for 2026*



Serving Today

Officiant:

The Rev. Patricia Phaneuf Alexander

The St. Dunstan's Chancel Choir:

Fred Atwood, Elin Botha, Maggie Clark, Heather Fetrow, Charles Humphries,
Zhihui Pang, Antony Zwerdling

Diane Atherton, *Director*

Ulysses Squitieri, *Organist*

Flower Guild:

Trudy Surut

Greeter:

Kiska Williams

Livestream Minister:

Karen Edwards

Crucifer:

Elin Botha

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath:

The Mesen-di Filippo Family

Children's Chapel:

Colin Flynn and Jenna Monroe

Readers:

Fred Atwood, The Rev. Jessica Ault, Sue Carroll, Cami Caudill, Walter Douglas,
Teresa Lee, Michelle Mesen, and Carmen Petruzzi

Ushers:

David and Janet Repka

Barista:

Fred Smoak

Snack Angels:

Nancy Douglas and Teresa Lee

Vestry Member of the Day:

Janet Repka

Attributions

Unless otherwise noted below, this morning's liturgy is taken from
The Book of Occasional Services, © 2022, Church Publishing, Incorporated.

Liturgical Cover Art:
Sue Carroll, *Advent III: Joy*

Explanation of *Gaudete* Sunday and “About Advent Lessons and Carols”:
Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, Alexandria, VA

Advent Wreath Liturgy:
Matthew Kozlowski (revised Nov. 2015)

The Scripture Readings:
New Revised Standard Version Bible, © 1989, Division of Christian Education of
the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA

The Collect for the Third Sunday of Advent:
The Book of Common Prayer, © 1979, Church Publishing, Incorporated.

The Collect for Commitment Sunday:
The Episcopal Diocese of Washington

All music used with permission, all rights reserved,
reprinted under OneLicense.net A-7122.

Parish Leadership

Vestry

The Reverend Patricia Phaneuf Alexander, *Rector*

Vince Leonard, *Senior Warden*

Fred Atwood, *Junior Warden*

Nils Overdahl, *Treasurer*

Michelle Mesen, *Registrar*

Leo Bouma

Nancy Douglas

Doug McManus

Carmen Petruzzi

Janet Repka

Capital Campaign Committee

Karen Kosiba Edwards

Carmen Petruzzi

Rosi Sweeney

Liturgical Artist-in-Residence

Sue Carroll

Seminarian's Lay Support Team

Chuck Cash

Nancy Douglas

Lynne Leonard (*Chair*)

Carmen Petruzzi

St. Dunstan's *Rectors Emeriti*

The Rev. John S. McDuffie

The Rev. Jeffrey B. MacKnight

Treasurer *Emeritus*

Cliff White