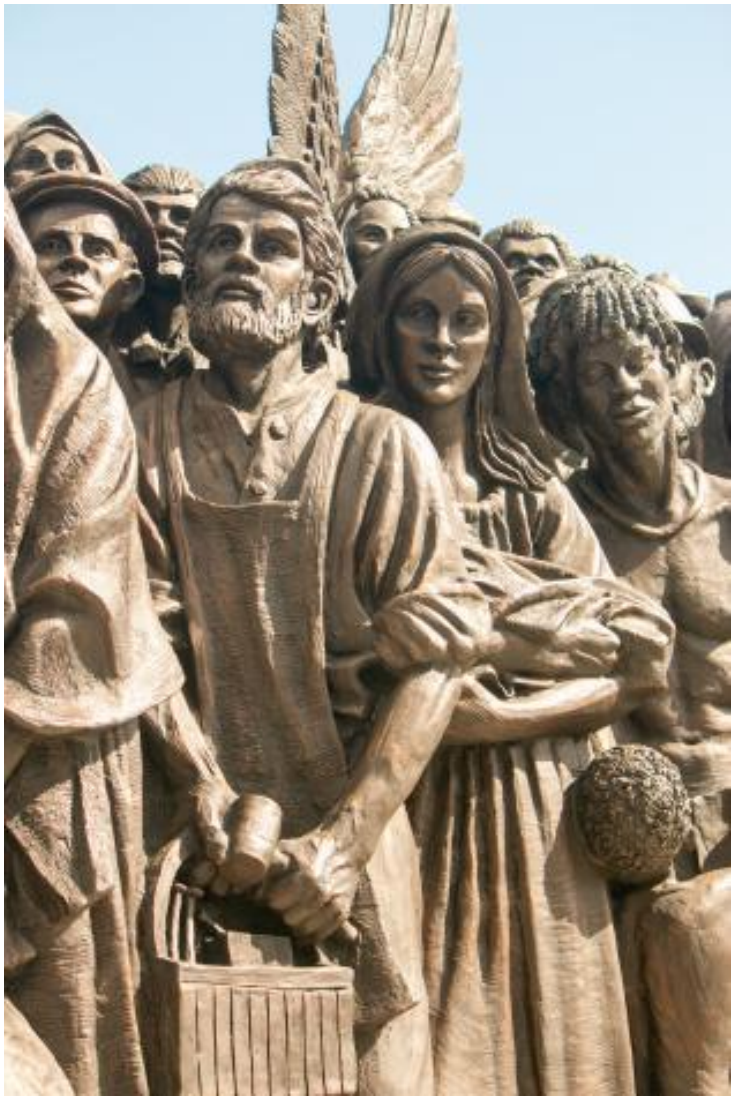
St. John's Episcopal Church

Georgetown Parish

www.stjohnsgeorgetown.org



Be You. Be Here. Belong.

Holy Eucharist

Blessing of the Animals

October 4, 2026

10:00 AM

Welcome to St. John's Church, Georgetown Parish

Please know how happy we are to share this day with you! We hope you will fill out the "Welcome" card that you'll find in the back of the pews and place it in the offering plate so we can send you more information about our vibrant community. Or just scan the QR code to add your name directly to our email list.

Name Badges

Please pick up or make your own name badge as you enter the church. You may leave your badge in the bins in Blake Hall after coffee hour. Childcare is available from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm in the atrium. Ushers are here to assist you. We are very glad you are here!

Clergy
The Rev. Dr. Laura Natta, Rector
The Rev. Sarah Duggin, Associate Rector

Director of Music
Aaron Goen

Verger
John Wise

Acolyte
Greg Page

Flower Guild
Virginia Elgin

Ushers
Hatam Mammadli
Anthony Vernon

Lector
Anthony Vernon

Intercessor
Meghen Miles Tuttle

Sacristans
Carol Dawson
Kelly Waller

Technology
Wilhelm Wells

St. John's Choir

Soprano
Kate Vetter Cain
Alicia Woodbury
Carolyn Carson
Emily Franksen
Kelly Waller

Tenor
Rexford Tester
Bryan Wells
Raymond Honeycutt
Tyler Metteer

Alto
Derek Greten-Harrison
Meghen Miles Tuttle
Virginia Elgin
Margaret Huckaby
Anna Holtschlag
Jeanne Morin

Bass
Mark Duer
Jay Tuttle
Jim Johnson
Howard Spendelow

Join us for Contemplative Prayer & Eucharist
on Tuesdays at 5:30pm in the Chapel of the Carpenter

Cover Art: *Angels Unawares* sculpture by Timothy Schmalz.
The inspiration of the work arises from a passage from Hebrew 13:2 found in the New Testament: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares".

Prelude *Meditation* on *Thaïs* Jules Massenet

Julia Angelov, violin

Liturgy of the Word

Processional Hymn 400 "All creatures of our God and King", vv. 1, 4, 5, & 7
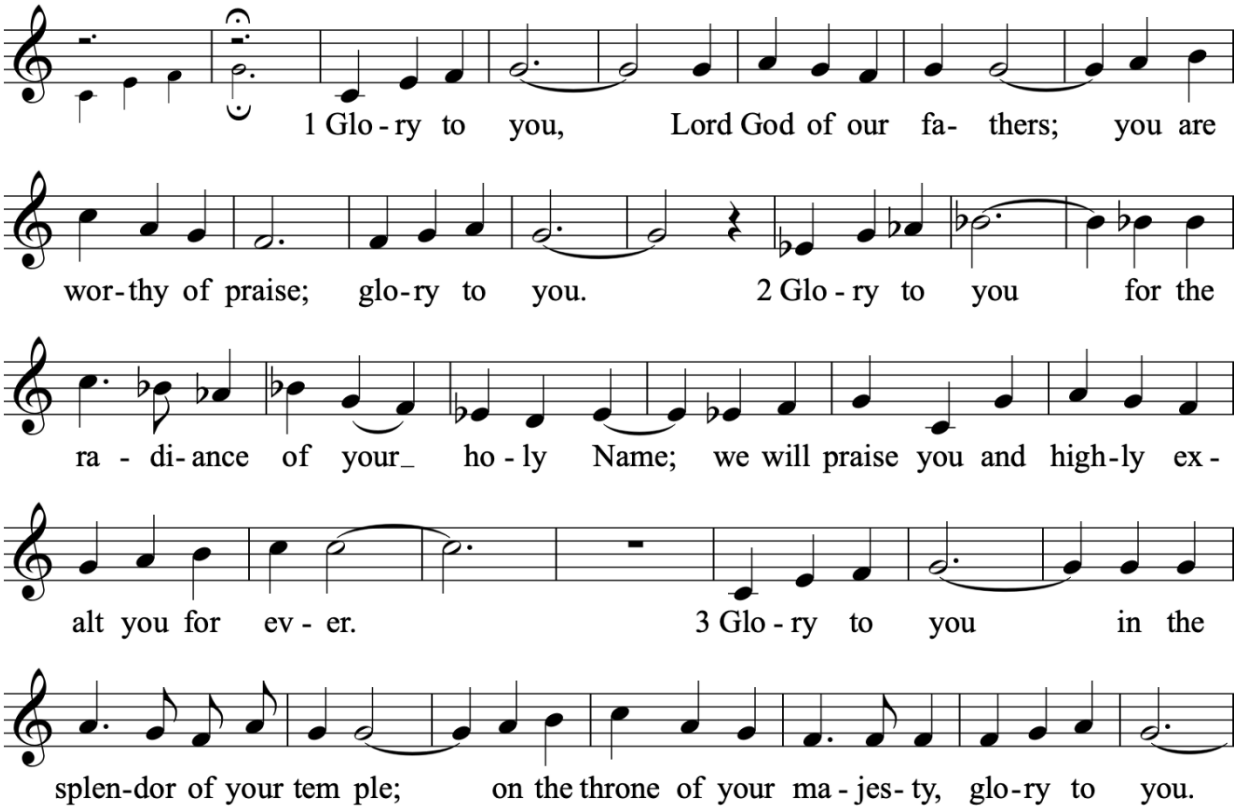
Opening Acclamation
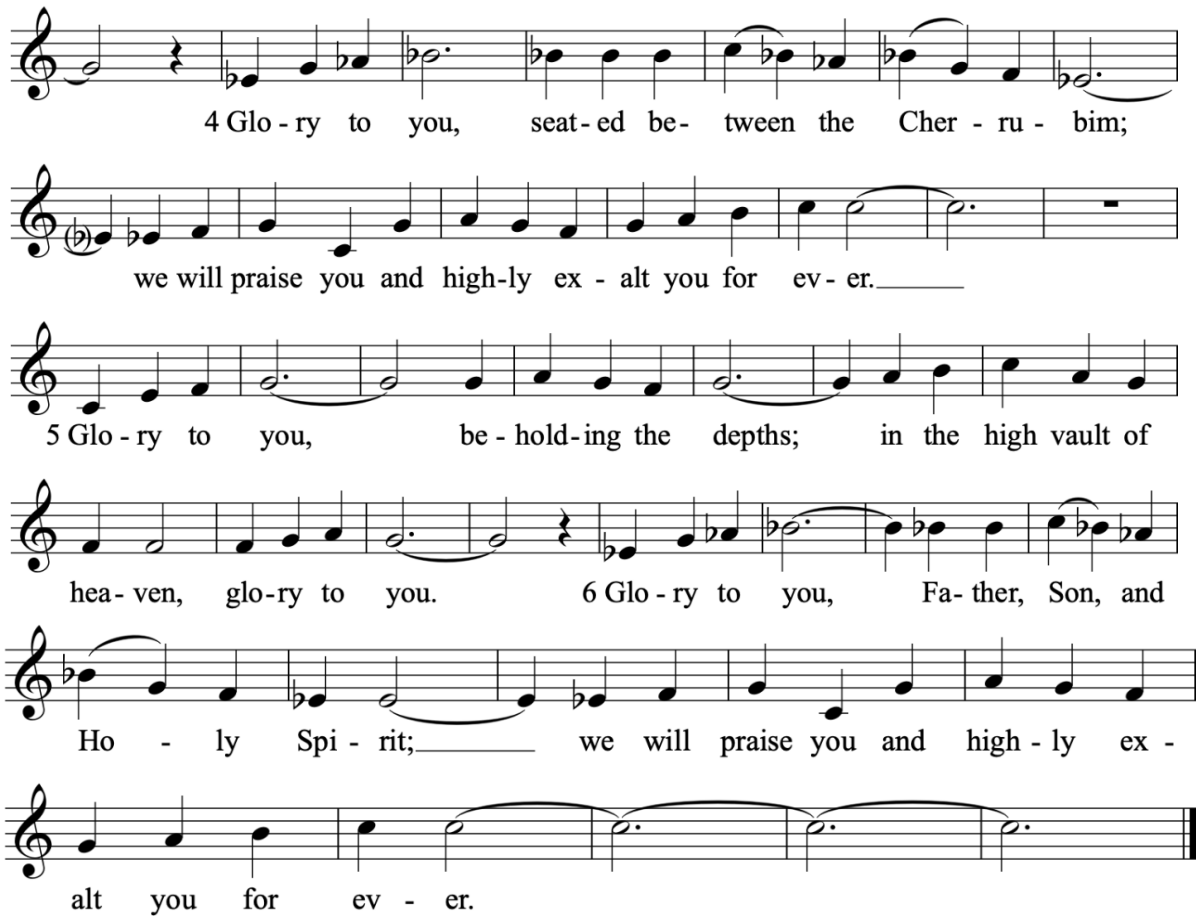
Celebrant: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People: **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever, Amen.**

The Collect for Purity

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.

Song of Praise S 236 "Glory to you" *Benedictus es, Domine*





The Collect of the Day

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Celebrant: Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we either desire or deserve: Pour upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things for which we are not worthy to ask, except through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Savior; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Please be seated

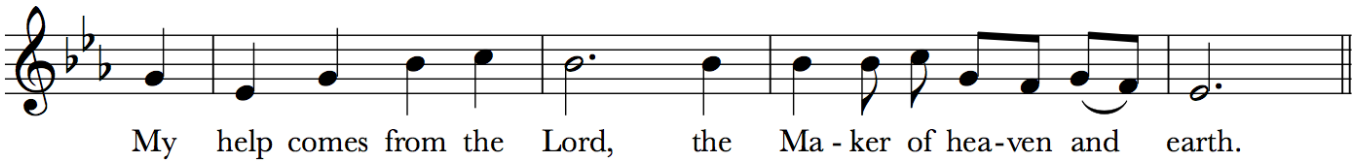
The First Reading **Hebrews 12:25 - 13:4**

See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking, for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven! At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven." This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of what is shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe, for indeed our God is a consuming fire. Let mutual affection continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them, those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. Let

marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers.
Reader: The Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God

Psalm 121

The Cantor(s) intone(s) the Antiphon. All Repeat. Then as indicated.



1 I lift up my eyes to the hills; *
from where is my help to come?

2 My help comes from the Lord, *
the maker of heaven and earth.

3 He will not let your foot be moved *
and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.

4 Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel *
shall neither slumber nor sleep; ***Antiphon***

5 The Lord himself watches over you; *
the Lord is your shade at your right hand,

6 So that the sun shall not strike you by day, *
nor the moon by night.

7 The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; *
it is he who shall keep you safe.

8 The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in, *
from this time forth for evermore.

Glory to the Father and to the Son,*
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now *
and will be forever. Amen. ***Antiphon***

Sequence Hymn 593 "Lord, make us servants of your peace"

The Holy Gospel John 9 39-41

Gospeller: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said, 'I came into this world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.' Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, 'Surely we are not blind, are we?' Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, "We see", your sin remains.

Gospeller: The Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon The Rev. Dr. Laura Natta

Please stand in body or spirit.

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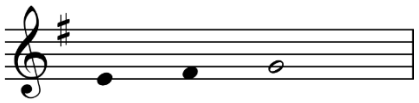
We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

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
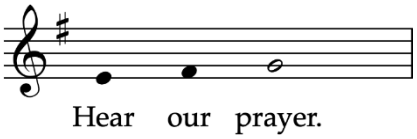
The Cantor sings the introduction. All respond as indicated.

Cantor: *Living God, we ask that you breathe and move in us daily. Strengthen our hearts with your boundless love and refresh our souls with your wisdom. We seek to know you more fully today and every day. Let us pray together as the People of God, saying, God in your mercy,*

All: 
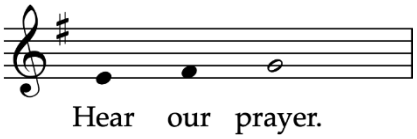
Intercessor: Gracious God, we thank you for the gift of joy. For special moments that enrich our interactions – held hands, long hugs, sparkling laughter and the soft tears of beauty.

Cantor: *God in your joyful mercy,*

All: 

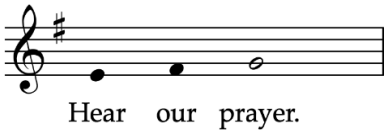
Intercessor: Loving God, help us to see others as reflections of you, granting us courage to act as one with you, that we may seize the moments you give us to heal, include and celebrate all people and the world in which we live.

Cantor: *God in your kind mercy,*

All: 
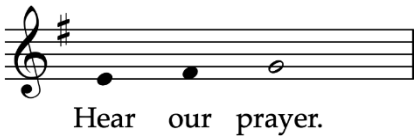
Intercessor: Almighty God, guide us in all our interactions with one another, that we may better model peace and understanding in our work and lives and shape our human systems to be just and sustainable.

Cantor: *God in your blessed mercy,*

All: 
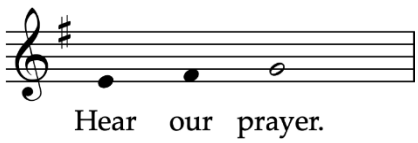
Intercessor: Creator God, guard all those in danger, trouble or who know loss and surround them with the light of your constant presence.

Cantor: *God in your profound mercy,*

All: 

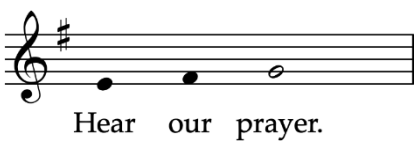
Intercessor: Gracious God, relieve and sustain all dear ones in any kind of need or trouble: We pray together for: **Amy, Benzie, Betsy, Bob, Charles, Craig, Dal, Danny, Ethan, Jan, Jennifer, Jim, Joan, Juan Carlos, Karen, Katie, Maria, Nick, Oliver, Paula, Reuben, Stephanie, Tom, and Trent.** Heal, O God, all those who are ill in body, mind or spirit, and uplift all victims of violence, war, accidents or natural disasters.

Cantor: *God in your infinite mercy,*

All: 

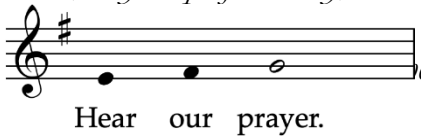
Intercessor: We pray for those working abroad to better the world, and for all people who have been wounded, held hostage or wrongly imprisoned.

Cantor: *God in your healing mercy,*

All: 

Intercessor: We pray for the intentions of the individuals in this community – stated now - either silently or aloud.

Cantor: *God, in your perfect mercy,*

All: 

e Celebrant adds a concluding collect

The Confession

Almighty God, Source of all that is, Giver of every good gift: You create all people in your image and call us to love one another as you love us. We confess that we have failed to honor you in the great diversity of the human family. We have desired to live in freedom, while building walls between ourselves and others. We have longed to be known and accepted for who we are, while making judgements of others based on the color of skin, or the shape of features, or the varieties of human experience. We have tried to love our neighbors individually while yet benefitting from systems that hold those same neighbors in oppression. Forgive us, Holy God. Give us eyes to see you as you are revealed in all people. Strengthen us for the work of reconciliation rooted in love. Restore us in your image, to be beloved community, united in our diversity, even as you are one with Christ and the Spirit, Holy and undivided Trinity, now and for ever. Amen.

The Absolution

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

The Peace

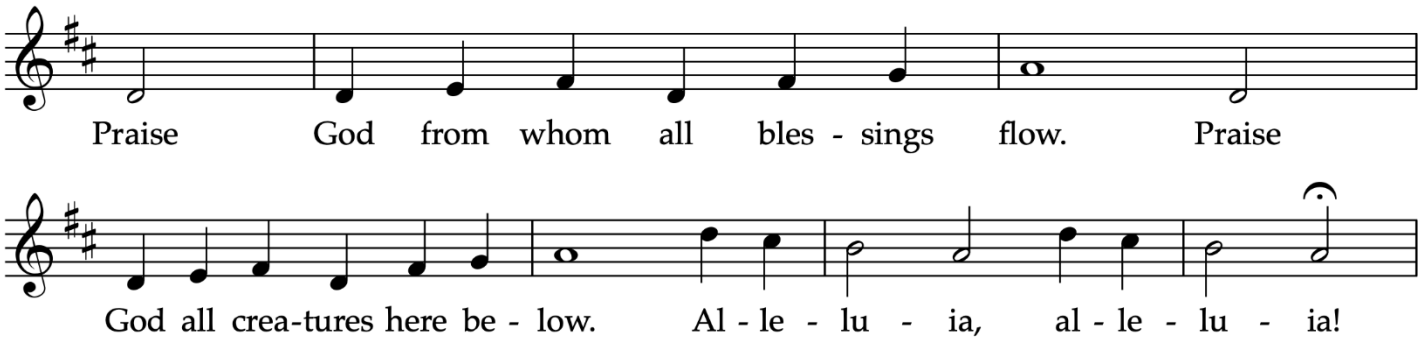
Celebrant: The Peace of the Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.

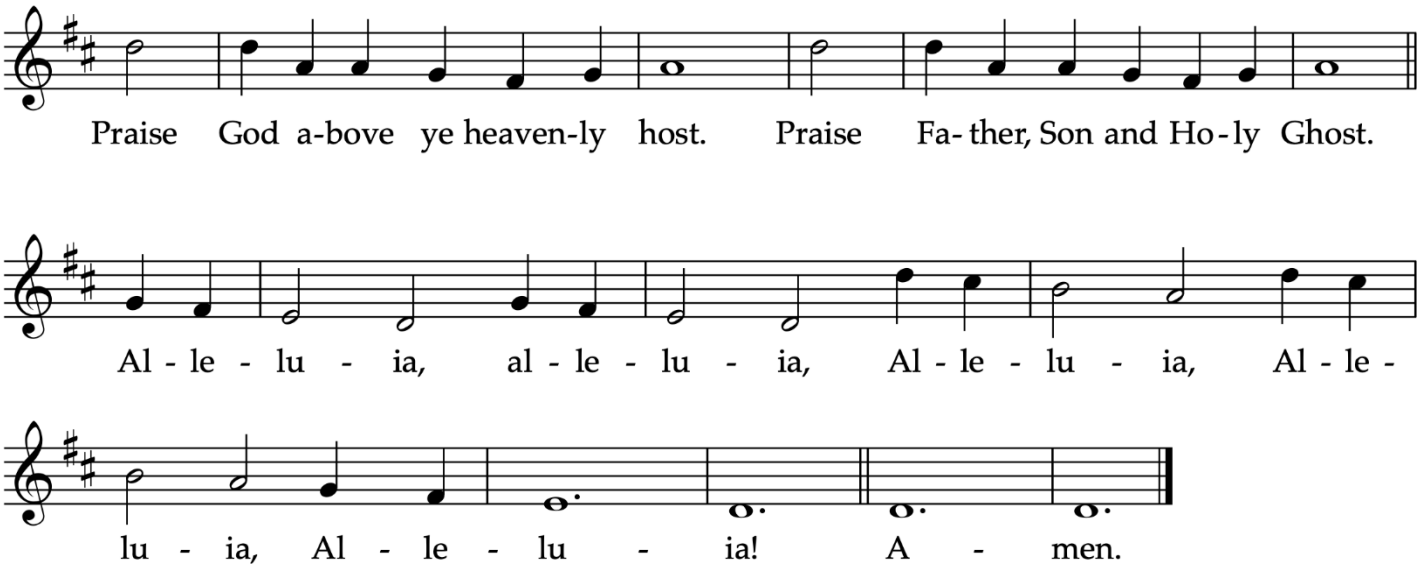
Offertory *The Canticle of Brother Sun* Grayston Ives

We appreciate your support!

Please consider making an offering using the QR Code to support St. John's ministries.

Doxology *Laßt uns erfreuen*





HOLY COMMUNION

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.**

God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.
Glory to you for ever and ever.

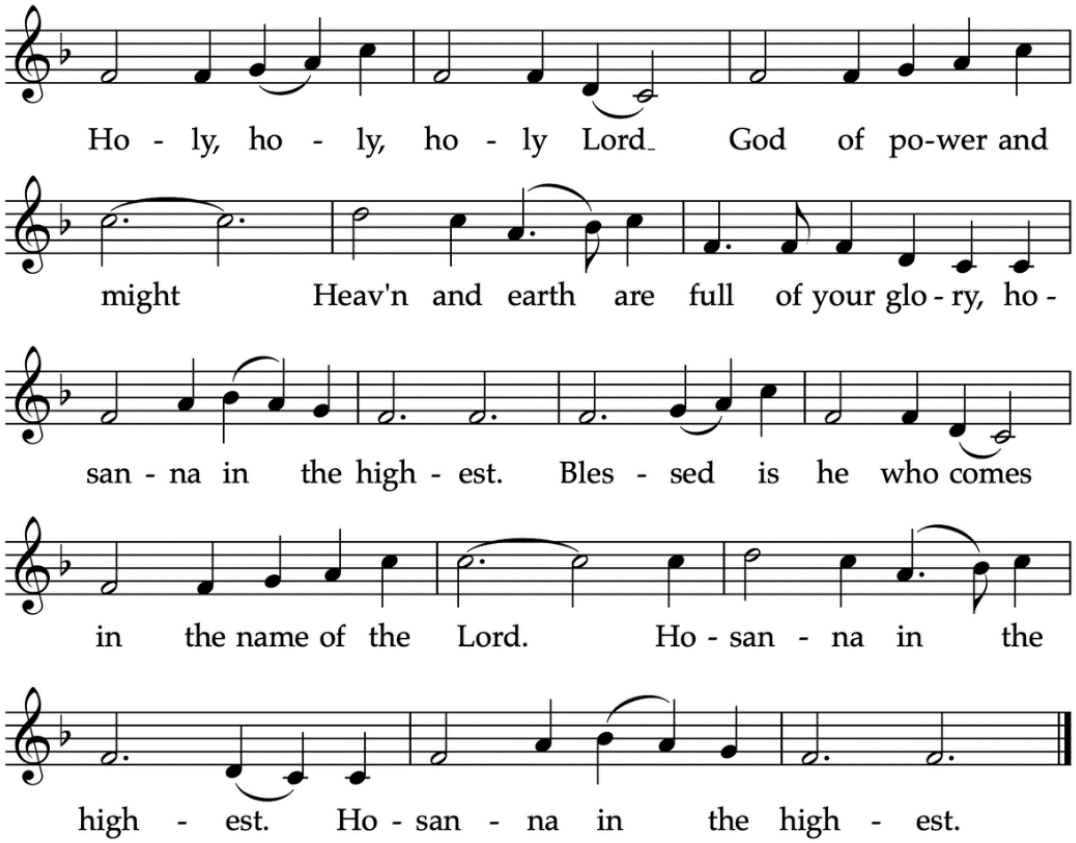
At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.
By your will they were created and have their being.

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.
Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.

Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.
By his blood, he reconciled us.
By his wounds, we are healed.

And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

Sanctus *Land of Rest*



The People stand or kneel. Then the Celebrant continues:

And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.
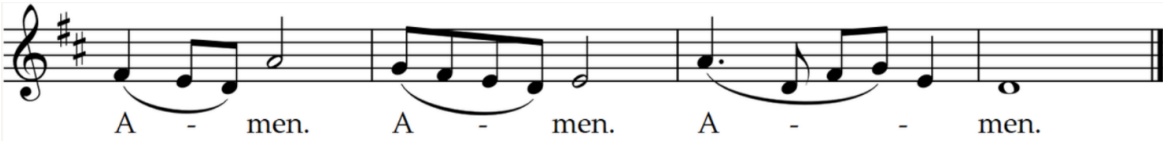
On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, 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."

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,
We celebrate his death and resurrection,
as we await the day of his coming.

Lord God of our forebears: God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob of Sarah, Ruth and Naomi; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.
Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.

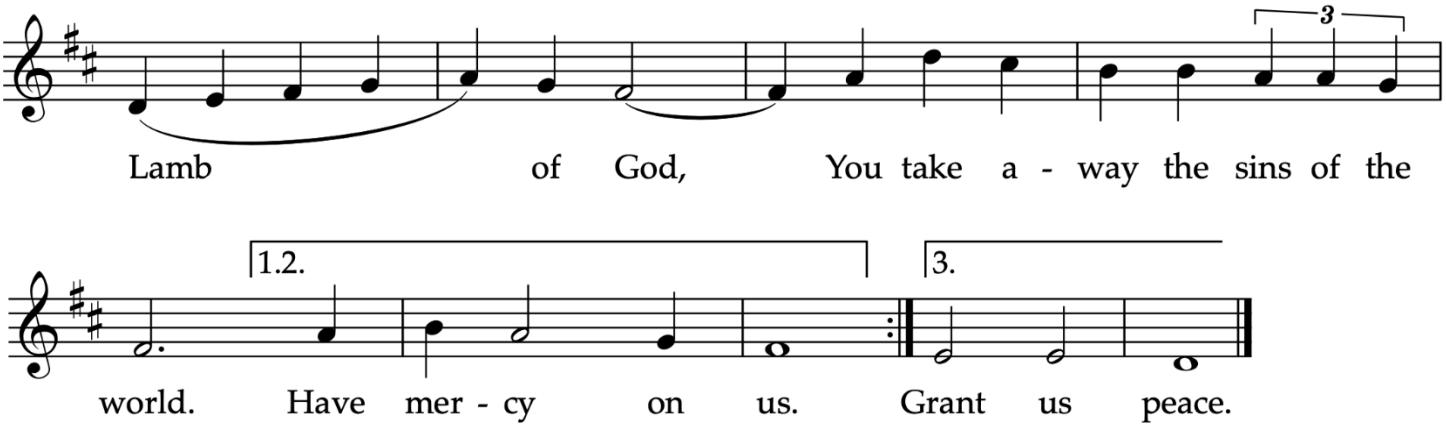
Accept these prayers and praises, Father, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation.



And now as our savior Christ has taught us we are bold to sing:

The Lord's Prayer: S 119

Fraction Anthem Richard Isele



The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you and know that all are welcome at God's Table.

Communion of the People

All those who seek a closer relationship with God in Christ are welcome to receive communion at St. John's. Communion bread will be distributed at the chancel steps. If you would like to receive wine, please sip from the cup. Please do not dip the bread in the cup. The communion minister will wipe the cup and turn it for the next person. If you would prefer a blessing in lieu of communion, please cross your hands over your chest.

Motet *Beati quorum via* Charles Villiers Stanford

Beati quorum via integra est, qui ambulant in lege Domini.	Blessed are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord.

-Psalm 119

Post Communion Prayer

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.

Welcome & Announcements

Blessing

Celebrant: Be careful as you go out into God's creation, for it does not belong to you. Be gentle with yourself and with one another, for you are the dwelling place of the Most High God. Be alert and hesitant, for sometimes God is but a whisper. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**.

Hymn 690 "Guide me, O thou great Jehovah"

Dismissal

Celebrant: Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia! Alleluia!

People: Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Postlude *Fugue à la gigue in G major, BWV 577* J. S. Bach

Pastoral care available. If you or a loved one needs prayer or assistance, our clergy and Stephen Ministry are ready to help. If you are feeling worried or hopeless, or are sick, and you would like to receive communion, a visit by a clergy member or Stephen Minister can be scheduled. To arrange an in-house or virtual visit, please contact the parish office at 202-338-1796.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

From The Rector:



Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that… some have entertained angels without knowing it. Hebrews 13:2

Last Sunday, Sarah reminded us of the mysterious ways the sacred interrupts our ordinary routines - calling us back to Hebrews 13:2: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels unawares. (I like the King James Version better)" In a world where we curate our existences with algorithmic feeds and comfort-zone affinity groups, we quietly surround ourselves only with those who look, think, and react like us. The concept of possibly "Entertaining angels unawares" Angels bursting into our day-to-day existence, remind us that genuine Christian community is an

intentional antidote to our self-created echo chambers. God's grace begins exactly at the edge of the unfamiliar, daring us constantly to widen our circle and discover God's messengers in the places, people, and creatures we least expect.

This weekend, as we celebrate the *Feast of St. Francis* and the blessing of our animal companions, that invitation expands beyond our human neighbor to all of God's creatures. Francis recognized that every creature - from the unruly puppy sleeping at our feet to the sparrow outside on the windowsill – all creatures…. ALL – are our neighbors, carrying messages of unconditional loyalty, presence, and simple joy. Animals reflect a pure, non-curated vulnerability that mirrors the divine. When we make room in our pews (and our hearts) for paws, feathers, and fur, we practice the holy hospitality of welcoming God's beloved creatures as quiet ambassadors of grace.

As October begins, we also turn our hearts toward All Saints, All Souls, and the vibrant tradition of Día de Los Muertos, a celebration of our Angels! Starting this Sunday, we are asking you to bring in framed photographs or mementos of your loved ones who have passed away - including the beloved animal companions who once shared your life - to place all the way around our sacred space. Together, we will build a living altar of memory so that whenever we gather, we do so visibly surrounded by "So great a cloud of witnesses." Every week, we can come together, welcome, and celebrate those members of our community, the strangers at the door, and the beloved angels whose love continues to shape our common life.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS TODAY 10/4 at Noon



Bring your beloved fur babies, scaly babies, stuffies, or photos of them for priestly blessings as we honor all of nature and our relations in the animal world, just as St. Francis of Assisi did. Social pets are welcome to the 10am service as well! **In addition, we're hosting an ADOPTION EVENT with City Dogs & City Kitty Rescue from 11:30am to 2:30pm!**

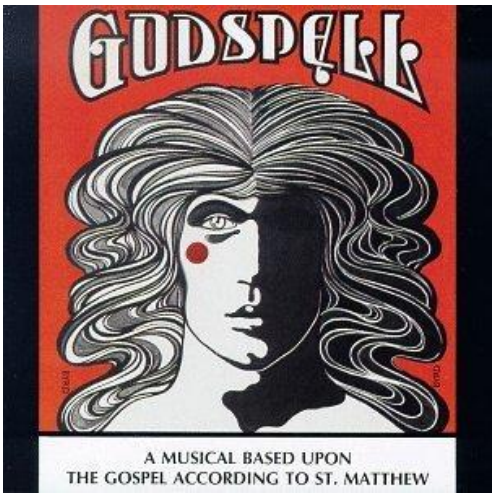
10/11 INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY



This Sunday we will celebrate the wisdom and deep spirituality of our Indigenous brothers and Sisters. Special prayers and music will be used as we strive to honor all the long-suffering tribes and nations that despite generations of mistreatment are still here waiting for us to recognize the Great Spirit in all living things.

Then, during coffee hour we'll be led again by Rev. Laura through the dynamics and stages of our 2-year Parish Vision Plan. We are truly in a special moment as we prepare for the next 230 years! If you missed the first talk, please make every effort to attend this one.

10/18 CHORAL BLAST SERVICE #2: GODSPELL SUNDAY!!!!



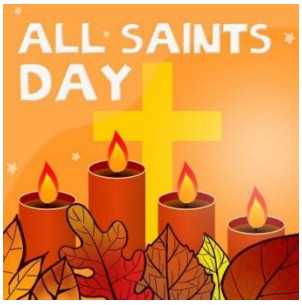
This will be a Sunday you Do.Not.Want.To.Miss! Cherry Lane, our runner up Choral Blast Team of Rexford Tester and Mark Duer are crafting a fabulous (of course!) service to joyously let your hair down and send love, fun and beauty through every fiber of your being. **Feel free to break out the bell bottoms, Quiana double-knit and tie-dyed clothes and join in the grooviest Sunday of the year**. Let's make it a day to remember! Our own Anthony Vernon will be the Guest Preacher.

10/25 A SERVICE OF CENTERING PRAYER



Come experience the healing and grounding practice of centering prayer and mindfulness. We are all looking forward to a shared moment of peace, purpose, and the quiet art of just simply being as we learn to better connect with the still, small voice of the Divine that lives within each of us. Our own Reuben Varghese will be our Guest Preacher. Dick and Linda Hall, coordinators of Contemplative Outreach of Maryland and Washington, an organization that supports the practice of Centering Prayer in contemplative groups, will lead a program about contemplative prayer during coffee hour.

CALLING ALL SAINTS!



To prepare for *All Saints Day* on November 1st, we invite you to help us fill up our Dia de Los Muertos Ofrendas (altars). Over the next few weeks, please bring in your saintly items to our special altar, and in the sanctuary window bays. We'll use your photos, mementos, symbols, trinkets, flowers, even bottles of their favorite beverages to welcome those beloved souls who have passed on so we may surround ourselves with their love and presence. Not sure what you might bring? Key Elements of an ofrenda include:

- **Marigolds**: Bright orange and yellow flowers whose scent guides them home.
- **Candles**: Lit to create a warm flame that lights the path for returning souls.
- **Papel Picado**: Delicate tissue paper cut-outs that represent the wind.

COMING IN OCTOBER – FAITH IN *ACTION*

How do we put our faith into action in the world around us?

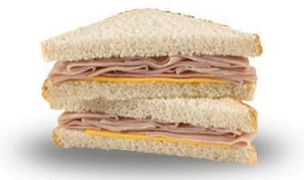


As people of faith, we are called not only to worship together, but also to live out the Gospel in the public square—with compassion, courage, and a commitment to the dignity of every person. This fall, we invite you to join us for *Faith in Action*, a monthly Coffee Hour series exploring how our faith can shape our engagement with some of the most important issues of our day.

Beginning in October, we'll gather to consider recent Supreme Court decisions on issues of particular concern to people of faith—including voting rights, immigration, and LGBTQ+ rights—and to look ahead to what the Court's 2026–2027 term may bring. We'll also learn more about how The Episcopal Church engages in advocacy and outreach in these areas and discover ways we can support and participate in that work.

Beginning in November, we'll turn our attention to selected topics and consider together what faithful action might look like in our own community. We hope you'll join us. Come to listen, learn, ask questions, share your perspective, and discern how God may be calling us to put our faith into action. And if you feel called to help lead a discussion on one or more of these subjects, please let us know. There is a place for every voice and every gift in this work.

GRATE PATROL 11/10-11

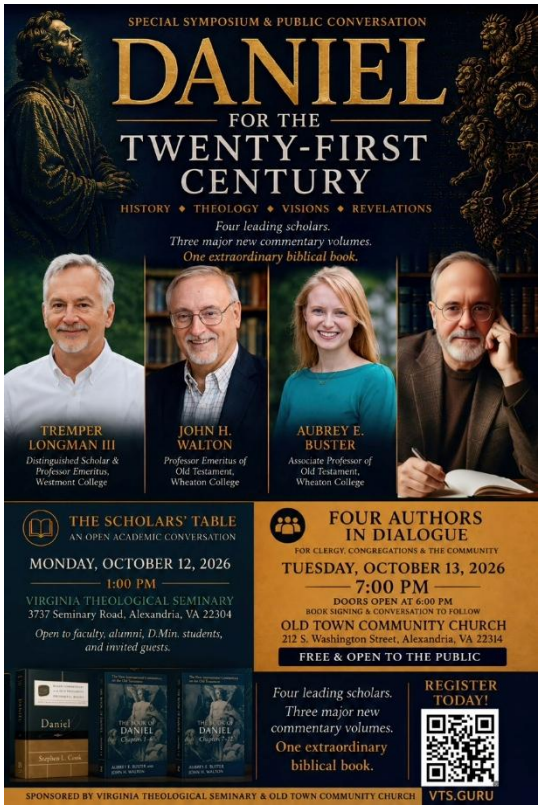


Please sign up for this holiday weekend. We appreciate all volunteers! Our hands hold the hearts of our neighbors. Join us right after church or on Monday afternoon.

Sign up here:

TWO EXCELLENT CHRISTIAN FORMATION OPPORTUNIES!!

DISCOVER DANIEL, Thursday October 13th



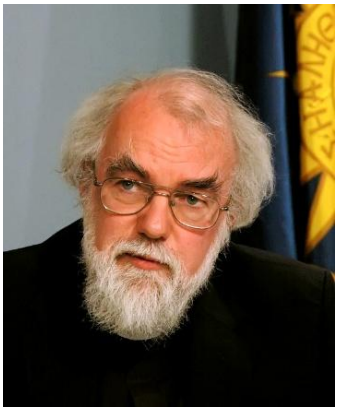
Attend a fascinating forum connecting serious scholarship with the theological and pastoral questions people bring to Daniel: power and empire, faithful witness, suffering, hope, and the strange symbolic world of apocalyptic Scripture.

Daniel for the Twenty-First Century: Four Authors in Dialogue, on Tuesday, October 13, 7:00–8:30 p.m., at Old Town Community Church in Alexandria. Registration is free.

Registration: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/daniel-for-the-twenty-first-century-four-authors-in-dialogue-tickets-1998998313768

Daniel Fest information: https://vts.guru

The RIGHT REV. ROWAN WILLIAMS LECTURE at Georgetown University



On Tuesday, October 20th the Rt. Rev. Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, will deliver the 2026 James M. and Margaret H. Costan Lecture in Early Christianity and be awarded an honorary degree in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to our understanding of Christian faith and to interreligious dialogue in the global Church.

His talk, *"Vision, Knowledge, Desire: the Intersection of Philosophy and Spirituality in Early Christian Writing,"* will speak to early Christian reflection on prayer and contemplation's connection to classical philosophical discussion.

This event is free and open to the public and takes place in Georgetown's historic Gaston Hall. We invite all members of the St. John's community. Register here: https://events.georgetown.edu/theology/event/rowan-williams



EXTRA, EXTRA, READ ALL ABOUT IT!!!

Our Parish 230th Anniversary Service and Party will be on Sunday, November 15th.

LAST CALL FOR YOUR RECIPES*!*

PARISH 230th RECIPES DUE NOW.

You've seen how we party—now it's time to share the "flavorite," tried-and-true recipes that keep us coming back for seconds (and thirds).

We are looking for one legendary recipe from every member in each of these categories: Appetizers & Drinks (The party starters), Mains & Sides (The heart of the table), Desserts (The grand finale).

Please email your recipe to tammycox1010@gmail.com. Don't forget to mention if it's Gluten-Free, Veggie, or Vegan.







St John's Episcopal Church

Georgetown Parish

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