

WELCOME TO ST. MARY'S

ST. MARY'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, FAITHFULLY ANGLICAN SINCE 2012

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³ "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" **Matthew 1:22-23**

DECEMBER 1, 2022

Sharing the Good News

As we begin the new church year (Year 'A'), you will notice that the "Gloria: is omitted until Christmas. Also, the lector will be reading the names of those on the prayer list.

Sunday, Dec. 4 – **Advent II**

Food Pantry Sunday

Anointing Sunday

39 Articles during coffee hour.

Sunday, Dec. 11 – **Advent III**

39 Articles during coffee hour

Sunday, Dec. 18 – **Advent IV**

After the service, we will decorate the church for Christmas.

Sunday, Dec. 25 – **Christmas Mass @10:30 (no coffee hour)**

This service will be even more special than usual, as we will be using our church organ during the service. You won't want to miss this.

Here is the Lector and coffee hour schedule for the coming month: All December services begin @10:30

12/4 - Advent II, Diane

12/11 – Advent III, Elisabeth

12/18 – Advent IV, Kathy

12/25 – Christmas Day, Debbie (no coffee hour)

We have three birthdays at **St. Mary's** in December:

Dec. 4 – Fr. Tom

Dec. 16 – Kathy Hahn

Dec. 23 – Dan Hahn

And one anniversary:

Dec. 16 – David and Tressie Kemp (#4)

Board Meeting: St. Mary's Church Council will meet Wed., **December 14** at 10 am in the Parish Center.

FR. TOM'S SCHEDULE

Sunday 10:30 AM – Mass

Wednesday - Office hours 9 to 12 PM

2nd Wednesday – 10

AM. Church council mtg.

1 pm, Bingo @ Holly

Brook

2 pm Bible Study @

Holly Brook

Thursday

Reflections: Prayer service @10 am; Bingo follows

South Park; Prayer

service 1:00; Bingo

@1:30

Contact information

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Like us on Facebook

stmarysanglicanchatham

Visit our webpage at

saintmaryanglican.org

We're on Instagram at

st.marys.anglican

Join us at 122 W. Walnut in

Chatham, IL

During Advent, the lector will be reading the names from this prayer list. If you wish to add a name, please let Fr. Tom or the lector know before the service begins. You may still add names from the congregation after the list is read.

Parish Prayer List

For Foley our Archbishop, for Alberto, our Bishop, for Tom, our Priest, and for Deacon Tom

For those fighting cancer: Debbie, Cindy, Karen, Carol, Lisa, Malia W.

For those in need of uplifting prayer: Diane, Kathy, Dan, Susan, Sherry, Frank, Jon S., Luke, Jerry, Donna, Jonas, Kathy, Debbie, Carolyn, Gary, Fr. Jason, Judy

For those in long term care: Gabriel, Grace, Danielle, the residents at Holly Brook, Reflections and South Park

For the Church's ministry in Nepal: Purna, Mahendra, Dipendra, Reshma, Tirtha, their families and Churches; the Transformation Spiritual Church

For all the victims of the COVID pandemic worldwide

For the persecuted Christians in throughout the world

For the growth of St. Mary's Anglican Mission

Thinking ahead: Since Christmas is on a Sunday, that means that we will also have a service on New Year's Day at 10:30!

CHRISTMAS AND THE HOLIDAYS

By [Anglican Pastor](#) | December 22nd, 2011

How do we as Christians find a way to celebrate the Feast of the Incarnation and the birth of Christ, and yet at the same time be a part of our culture?

We have to know both the culture in which we live *and* the Bible in order to be faithful. In order to navigate this in our own culture, it might be helpful for us to see "The Holidays" as distinct from "Christmas."

"The Holidays" are what we as a country enjoy during this time of year. Family, friends, and community and gift giving and feasting abound. The Holidays are fun and enjoyable and anyone can participate. People all over the world have been feasting at the end or beginning of the year for centuries. We live in a culture in which not everyone celebrates a Christian Christmas. But the public "Holiday" time is a happy civic time in our country, of friendship, family, and good cheer. We enjoy this civic celebration along with others in our community.

But I think we should keep Christ and the word "Christmas" distinct from "The Holidays." This year I saw a sign in Wal-Mart that said "Christmas Layaway." Need I say more? Christ, the Messiah, the Lord of Lords, the Prince of Peace does not sponsor a layaway program so that people can accrue debt in laying up gadgets and gifts. By using him to sell goods, the reality of who he is becomes mixed

up with the image of the moneychangers. The last thing we want to do is insist that retailers call this “Christmas.” Let them call what they are doing “holiday” and let the Church keep Christmas!

I think we can enjoy the festive holidays with everyone, while still keeping Christmas as the true Christian feast by maintaining its sacred and holy character in our celebration. In other words, we can set Christmas apart without demanding that our culture do so. I can't imagine Jesus demanding that people celebrate his birthday, or trying to shut down other festivities. But I can imagine him lovingly calling people to join him at his table, the true and holy feast.

“Christmas” is literally the “Christ Mass.” It is the great Feast of the Incarnation in the Christian Church Year. We, the Church, are called to “keep Christ in Christmas” by worshiping him. Attending worship at Christmas is a great gift of God's grace to us. We aren't called by guilt or shame, we are called by love and grace. In this spirit of grace, I call upon you in the name of the Church to gather at worship, or if you are traveling, to take the time to find a place of worship, and to reverence him and rejoice in his coming.

We are also called to feast – to give gifts, to eat and drink and be merry – for the Messiah has come! He is the reason for our feast.

An additional way to set Christmas apart is by marking each of the 12 days through prayer and celebration. We are called, each of us, to meditate on, celebrate, and rejoice in the reality that God became flesh and dwelt among us. The 12 days of Christmas include several feasts, like the Feast of St Stephen the day after Christmas. Following and marking these days helps us to celebrate in a distinctly Christian way which reminds us that we are not of the world, and have our own, Christian way.

Finally, Christmas is a time to remember the poor, those in any need or trouble, and the outcast. The Holidays are a time of depression and anxiety for many, including some of the family we visit, or even ourselves. We are called to reach out to our fellow man, especially now, as an act of worship.

My experience has been that people are attracted to distinctly Christian celebrations. I would even say this is a mission minded way to evangelize. We can enjoy the Holidays, but follow the Christian way as distinct, inviting others to follow Jesus.

So enjoy the Holidays! And keep Christ in Christmas by gathering at the manger to adore him, Christ the Lord.

Merry Christmas!

I'd love to hear your thoughts. Fr. Tom