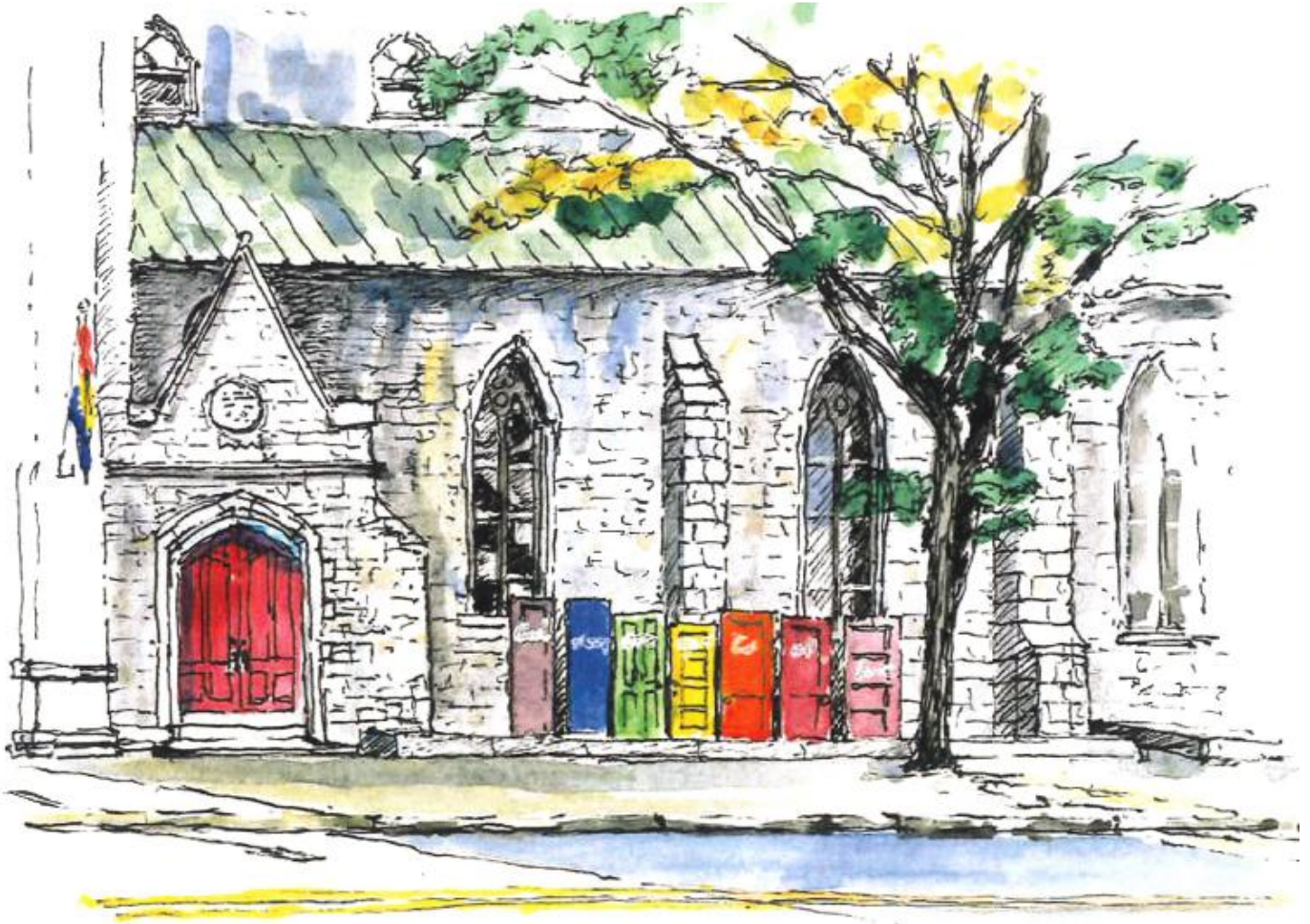




St. Paul's  
Syracuse

The Downtown  
Episcopal Church



"GOD'S DOORS ARE OPEN TO ALL. LOVE

W. ELKINS

DECEMBER 21, 2025  
8:00 AM & 10:00 AM  
THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



## Understanding Episcopal Liturgy

### *#46. Why do some people address our priest as 'Father Philip'?*

There are several good options for addressing or referring to the priest in an Episcopal Church:

**The Reverend Philip Major** - This is the formal title for a priest or a deacon in the Episcopal Church. The article should always be included, since this is a formal title. It seems a bit formal for everyday use.

**Pastor Philip** - 'Pastor' is a Latin word meaning 'shepherd'. People sometimes choose this option, since the work of the priest is to lead the congregation.

**Father Philip** - In Matthew 23, Jesus seems to warn us against calling anyone 'father'. (This would seem to apply to our biological fathers as well.) Read in context, it seems pretty clear that Jesus concern was about a specific group of religious leaders who 'lorded it over others'. They focused their attention on the privileges of their positions and required people to address them by honorific titles.

When I began my first position as a full-time priest, one of the first people I met called me 'Father Philip' and introduced me to everyone else as 'Father Philip'. I noticed it was easy for the children to say and understand. It works the same way for my female clergy friends, Mother Julie and Mother Becky.

At St. Paul's it seems especially apt, because for many of us, St. Paul's functions as a sort of family. Families aren't perfect, and we aren't perfect, but we strive to show up for one another. As long as our understanding of a family isn't too hierarchical, it seems like a good option.

**Philip** - Most people at St. Paul's just call me by my first name, again, as we would in a family.

*If you have a question about something in our liturgy, I will be happy to answer it. Please ask in person, or send an email to me at [revmajor@stpaulsyr.org](mailto:revmajor@stpaulsyr.org).*

*Fr. Philip +*

# ORDER OF SERVICE

*Our morning worship begins with the first note of the organ prelude and your silent prayers. Please refrain from conversations during this time.*

**ORGAN VOLUNTARY:** *Es ist ein Ros*

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

*The people are invited to stand.*

**HYMN 54** • “Savior of the nations, come!”

*Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

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

**CANTICLE HYMN 56** • “O come, O come, Emmanuel” (v 7&8)

*Veni, veni Emmanuel*

### COLLECT OF THE DAY

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

God with us, born of Mary, give us the faith of Joseph to see the Spirit's work where the world sees only shame; to listen to the promise and waken to the cry of life renewed, and love reborn; through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come.

*All* **Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

### LESSON • Isaiah 7:10-16

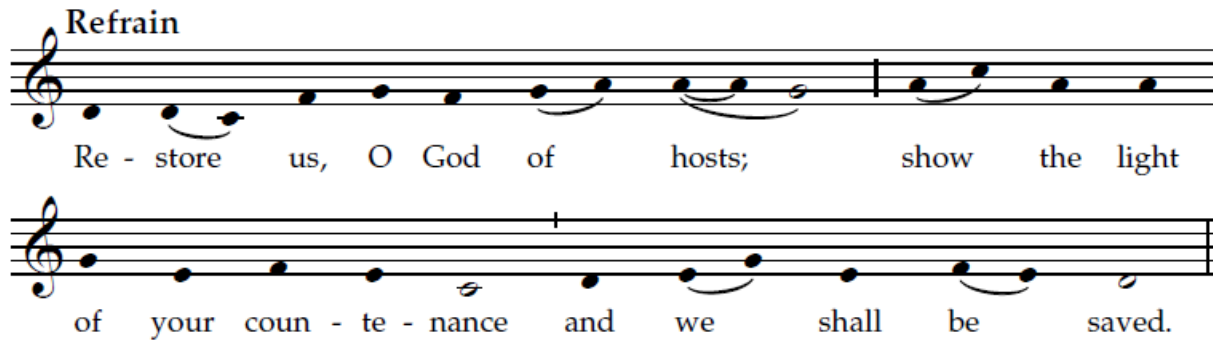
*Lector* A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.  
Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for 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. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

*Lector* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.  
*People* **Thanks be to God.**

## THE RESPONSE –

Psalm 80:1-2, 4-6, 16-17 *Qui regis Israel*

Mode 1



Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim. In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your strength and come to help us. **Refrain**

O LORD God of hosts, how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your people? You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink. You have made us the derision of our neighbors, and our enemies laugh us to scorn. **Refrain**

Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, the son of man you have made so strong for yourself. And so will we never turn away from you; give us life, that we may call upon your Name. **Refrain**

## EPISTLE • Romans 1:1-7

*Lector*

A reading from Paul's letter to the Romans.

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Lector*

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

*People*

**Thanks be to God.**

*The people are invited to stand.*

## GRADUAL HYMN 497 • "How bright appears the Morning Star"

*Wie schön leuchtet*

## HOLY GOSPEL • Matthew 1:18-25

*Celebrant*

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

*People*

**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

*Celebrant*

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child

conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

“Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

*Celebrant  
People*

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus.  
**Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

*Please be seated.*

## **SERMON**

The Rev. Philip Major

*A brief silence follows the sermon.*

*The people are invited to stand.*

## **NICENE CREED**

*The word “creed” comes from the Latin credo, translated here as “we believe.” Credo is not simply belief in accurate propositions, but more deeply a sense of relationship or trust—an alternate translation might be “we give our heart,” “we trust,” “we rely upon.” Developed in the fourth century as a means of unifying a divided church, the Nicene Creed has been used by Christians in*

*worship for almost two thousand years, and connects us to our ancient ancestors in the Communion of Saints. The Creed is used in worship not because it comprises a list of doctrinal statements one must affirm in order to be considered a Christian, but rather as a song of praise and confidence in the Holy Trinity: God in three persons who creates, redeems and sanctifies a holy people.*

*All*

**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.**

*Please remain standing.*

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Give thanks for the blessings we enjoy, our life here at St. Paul's, for the material things that allow us to live well, and for the company of relatives and friends we love.

We pray for the Holy Catholic Church, both the West and the East, as renewed efforts are made to overcome the split between Western Christianity and the Orthodox churches of Eastern Christianity. May the divisions of the past come to an end. Pray for Sean, our Presiding Bishop; DeDe, our bishop; Joseph and Ieva, our Wardens, and for Philip, our Rector.

*The people add their own prayers, silently or aloud.*

Stir up your power, O Lord: **And hear our prayer.**

Good Lord, bless our nation and enlighten our leaders, especially in the national government, when they exercise their authority. We pray that nowhere do officials yield to the temptations of money, power, vengeance or vanity. Grant grace to our mayor, our governor, our Congressional representatives, our courts and our President.

*The people add their own prayers, silently or aloud.*

Stir up your power, O Lord: **And hear our prayer.**

We pray for the Earth, our only home, for the great harvests we enjoy and the beauty of Central New York, its towns, farms and forests. Strive to protect Nature everywhere, and to deal with predicted climate changes that can make new parts of the world uninhabitable.

*The people add their own prayers, silently or aloud.*

Stir up your power, O Lord: **And hear our prayer.**

We ask for the help of the God of Jacob who loves the righteous and frustrates the way of the wicked. Protect those bowed down by war and destruction, especially in Ukraine, where so many cities and towns are in ruins and so many have fled the country. Protect the lives of those taken prisoner and those who have been kidnapped.

*The people add their own prayers, silently or aloud.*

Stir up your power, O Lord: **And hear our prayer.**

We remember those who suffer, who are in some kind of pain: from illness, loneliness, injustice, cruelty or hunger. Here at St. Paul's we pray for *n.* and for those you know of, saying their names aloud or in your heart.

*The people add their own prayers, silently or aloud.*

Stir up your power, O Lord: **And hear our prayer.**

May God be merciful to all who have died. We pray especially for those people we have loved and are gone from our lives. Yet they still live in our hearts, for they were kind, and they loved us. We remember those for whom no one prays, in the hope that they, too, are among the saints. Today we remember *n.* and those you name aloud or in your heart.

*The people add their own prayers, silently or aloud.*

Stir up your power, O Lord: **And hear our prayer.**

*The Celebrant adds a concluding prayer.*

## CONFESSION

*The people are invited to sit / kneel.*

*Officiant*

Let us confess our sins to God.

*All*

**God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and**

the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.

## ABSOLUTION

*Officiant*

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

*All*

**Amen.**

*The people are invited to stand*

## THE PEACE

*Celebrant*

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People*

**And also with you.**

# LITURGY OF THE TABLE

*The bread and wine for communion and the offering plates are brought forward at the beginning of the offertory.*

## OFFERTORY

*At the Offertory, we return thanks for God's blessings in our lives and invite you to place your contribution in the offering plate in the main aisle or give by texting **73256** entering **stpaulsyr** (all lower case) and the amount you want to give.*



*Celebrant*

All things come of Thee, O Lord.

*People*

**And of thine own have we given thee.**

*The People are invited to sit.*

**AN ANTHEM** “Joseph dearest, Joseph mine”

German, 15<sup>th</sup> century

*The people are invited to stand*

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING, Eucharist Prayer B

Musical notation for the Great Thanksgiving, featuring four staves with lyrics. The first staff is for the Celebrant and the People, the second for the Celebrant and the People, the third for the Celebrant, and the fourth for the People. The lyrics are: "The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.", "Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.", "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.", and "It is right to give him thanks and praise."

*Celebrant*                      *People*

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

*Celebrant*                      *People*

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

*Celebrant*

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People*

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

*Celebrant* It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth . . . Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

8:00 **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

10:00 **Hymnal S-124**

David Hurd (b.1950)

*Celebrant* 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."

*All* Therefore, according to his command, O Father  
**We remember his death,  
We proclaim his resurrection,  
We await his coming in glory;**

*Celebrant* 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 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.

*All* **Amen.**

*Celebrant* As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

## THE LORD’S PRAYER

*All*                      **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen..**

## THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

*The breaking of the bread symbolizes the activity whereby God emptied Godself of divine power for purpose of reconciling Godself with us. We have no words to accurately describe this divine activity, thus a period of 10-15 seconds of silence is kept following the breaking of the bread and before the singing of the Fraction Anthem.*

## FRACTION

8:00

*Celebrant*                      Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
*People*                          **Therefore, let us keep the feast, Alleluia.**

**10:00 Hymnal S-154**

From *New Plainsong*; David Hurd (b.1950)

*The people are invited to be seated.*

*You are invited to consume the consecrated bread immediately after you receive it. If you choose to receive the wine, drink directly from the cup. Gluten-free wafers are available. Please ask the communion minister. The sacrament of communion is complete if the bread or wine is received; it is not necessary to receive both.*

*During the distribution of communion, Prayers for Healing and Wholeness may be offered at the Peace Altar.*

**AT THE COMMUNION • “I sing of a maiden”**

Malcolm Archer (b. 1952)

*The Women of the Choir*

**COMMUNION HYMN • 81 “Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming”**

*Est ist ein Ros*

*The People are invited to stand.*

*Officiant*                      Let us pray.  
*All*

**God of abundance, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation; you have united us with Christ and one another; and you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue for ever in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.**

## BLESSING

**HYMN 66 • “Come, thou long expected Jesus”**

*Stuttgart*

## DISMISSAL

*People:*                      **Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**POSTLUDE • Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele**

Georg Böhm (1661-1733)

*Any music reprinted in the leaflet and streamed is under ©OneLicense A-72637  
Prayers of the People were written by St. Paul’s prayer leaders.*

***Please Keep These People in Your Prayers:***

Destany W., Anne D., and Stephanie B.

We remember those who have died in recent days.

The greens on the altar are given to the glory of God, and by Denise McAndrew in memory of her father and grandparents.

***Our thanks today for the...***

**Altar Guild:** DJ Iglesias & Joe Russo

**Lay Reader:** Joseph von Souder

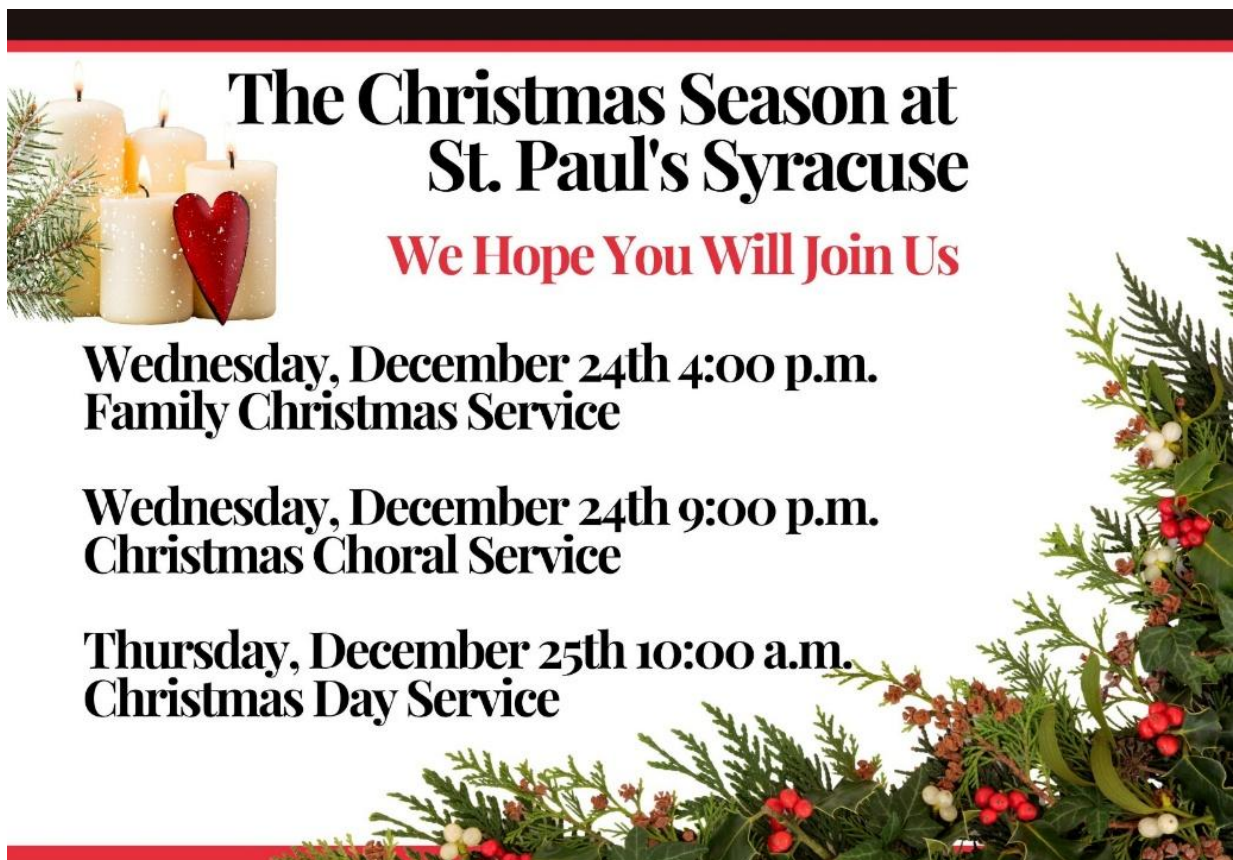
**Ushers:** Willson Cummer

**Flowers:** Flower Guild

**Announcements**

\* Please join us following 10 a.m. worship today for the Greening of the Nave. It's fun and cooks in the kitchen are preparing a delicious soup lunch for all who stay to help!

\* Please see the announcement for service times for all of our Christmas worship services. Next Sunday, the first Sunday after Christmas, we will hold a single worship service at 9:30 a.m.



**The Christmas Season at  
St. Paul's Syracuse**

**We Hope You Will Join Us**

**Wednesday, December 24th 4:00 p.m.  
Family Christmas Service**

**Wednesday, December 24th 9:00 p.m.  
Christmas Choral Service**

**Thursday, December 25th 10:00 a.m.  
Christmas Day Service**



# Christmas Flower Memorials & Honorariums



Given for the Glory of God  
by Jim and Ieva Doyle

In thanksgiving for my family and friends.  
Given by Debbie Bogan

In loving memory of our parents, Bernice & George Anderson and  
Ruth & Frank Webster  
Given by Marcia and George Anderson III

In loving Memory of: Dr. & Mrs. Ralph F. Spencer, Ralph F. Spencer, Jr,  
Mr. & Mrs. Newton S. Wiley, Sr and Frank L. Wiley  
Given by Sandy & Newt Wiley

In loving memory of Kathie Doctor  
Given by Laverne Doctor

In loving memory of William & Virginia Elkins and Nathaniel & Clara Abbott  
Given by Betsy Elkins

In loving memory of the Rev. Harold Avery  
Given by Jeanne Avery


In loving memory of Charles Goetz  
Given by Ellie Major

In honor of Ruth Lopez, a human rights lawyer that works for Cristosal, who  
remains imprisoned in El Salvador since May 2025 with no charges being filed  
nor a trial conducted.  
Given by Doug and Rev. Perry Mouncey

In loving memory of William Gerard and Thomas Gerard  
Given by Catherine Gerard and Joe Moorman

In loving memory of Nancy Bronder and Flora & Gordon Major  
Given by Rev. Philip Major

In loving memory of Philip & Elizabeth Chase, Charles & Laura Estabrook,  
Morris & Mary Chase, Steve Chase and Hilda Broad  
Given by Sarah Chase



## Officers

Senior Warden: Joe Moorman  
Junior Warden: Ieva Doyle  
Treasurer: Doug Mouncey  
Assistant Treasurer: Sandi Yingling  
Clerk of the Vestry: Anita Wagner

2025

## Vestry & Team Leaders

2025: Matthieu van der Meer, Harry Lambright, Barbara Bell  
2026: Jeanne Chu, Tim Cassavaw, DJ Igelsrud  
2027: Willson Cummer, Joe Russo, Tim Simmons  
Finance Committee Chairperson: David Ridings  
Children's Ministry Leader: Jeanne Avery  
Worship Ministry Team Convener: Laurie Sanderson  
Formation Ministry Team Convener: Jeanne Avery  
Mission & Service Team Convener: Betsy Elkins  
Community Fellowship Min. Convener: Elizabeth Belden-Handler  
Buildings & Grounds Chair: Bill Pitcher  
Office Volunteers: Liz Handler, Kira Dirghalli, Betsy Elkins, Sandi Yingling

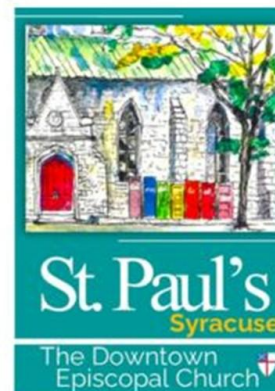
## Staff

The Right Reverend Dr. DeDe Duncan Probe, Bishop of Central New York  
The Reverend Philip Major, Rector of St. Paul's  
James L. Potts, Organist and Choirmaster  
Judy McAdoo-Pelton, Operations Manager  
Doug Mouncey, Parish Assistant (Volunteer)  
Mark King, Technology Assistant  
Derek Lane, Security



## St. Paul's Episcopal Church

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310 Montgomery St. (mailing address)  
Syracuse, NY 13202  
315 474-6053



[www.stpaulsyr.org](http://www.stpaulsyr.org)

