The Hillside Messenger

VOLUME 21, Issue 1

JANUARY 2025

A Message from the Rector: Reflecting the Epiphany of the Lord Jesus Christ in Our Lives

he word epipha*nv* means "appearance," and the Feast of the Epiphany is both the twelfth and last day of Christmastide and the festival celebrating the Lord Jesus Christ's manifestation as Savior and Redeemer to the world. The earliest celebration of the festival dates to second century Egypt, where it was associated with the Lord's Baptism. By the fourth century, the Festival of the Epiphany was celebrated by the Orthodox Churches in the East, and the Nativity of Christ and His Baptism were associated with it. When, in the latter part of the fourth century, the Western and Eastern Churches began adopting one another's Nativity festivals, the Western Churches used this festival mainly to commemorate the visit of the Magi and to emphasize the Lord's Epiphany as a revelation of Christ to the Gentiles (p. 107, Massey

Hamilton Shepherd, Jr.: *The Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1950. 5th Printing, 1955).

The account of the Magi's visit to the infant Jesus (*St. Matthew 2:1-12*) is the passage most often associated with the Epiphany in the West.



Our Revised Common Lectionary used by the ACNA *Book of Common Prayer* (2019) lists this passage as a possible Gospel Lesson for both the Second Sunday of Christmas and the Epiphany. St. Matthew is the only one of the Four Evangelists (Ss. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) to record the visit of the Magi, or wise men, to Jesus in Bethlehem:

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king. behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saving, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east. and are come to worship Him.

St. Matthew 2:1-2, KJV

King Herod, or Herod the Great, had become King of the Jews with the approval of the Roman Senate and had secured his kingdom

the Roman Senate and had secured his kingdom only after three years of fighting. Therefore, he was alarmed at the news of an unknown King of the Jews who would take his kingdom away from him. What is significant about these verses is that the wise men are not Jews, but they have come

Inside this issue:

Great Commission Campaign	4
Vestry Matters	5
For the New Year	8
A Suggestion	9
Our Chapel Family Prayer List	10
A Prayer for the Middle East	11
A Prayer for Our Congregation	11
Parish Postings	12
Upcoming Events	15

Reflecting the Epiphany of the Lord Jesus Christ in Our Lives

from the East to worship the One who has been born King of the Jews since they have seen His star in the east. These wise men were astrolo-



gers, who studied the constellations and movement of the stars to try and discern the future, particularly important events that were about to take place. From their astronomical observations. they concluded that a great Jewish king was about to be born. This led them to make the journey to Bethlehem. In later Christian tradition, the Magi came to be thought of as kings (perhaps on account of these prophetic passages: **Psalm** 72:10; Isaiah 49:7; Isaiah 60:3). Also, because they offered three gifts (gold, frankincense, and myrrh), it came to be believed that there were three of them. This tradition is represented in Hymn 51 "We three kings of Orient are." Whether there were three of them or not, or whether they were kings as well as magi, or just magi, we encounter here a unique revelation! Astrologers, whom neither Judaism nor Christianity

permit in their religions, received a revelation through their astronomical observations connected with astrology that the King of the Jews was to be born. So far as we know, they did not have any skepticism of the truth of their findings. They just set out with their gifts on their long journey to worship the King of the Jews. What we read about here is the Epiphany of the Lord to these Gentile wise men. They believed what revelation they received. When they arrived in Jerusalem, they asked where to find the King of the Jews who had been born (**St. Matthew** 2:3). The chief priests and scribes told King Herod that according to Micah, the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).

Then Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem, telling them to return to him and bring the news of the Child's location, so that he, too, might go and worship Him. But Herod's motive was actually false, since he later murdered all the children in Bethlehem who were two years and under. The wise men, aided by the star they had seen in the east, found the Lord Jesus and worshipped Him, offering their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. God then spoke to them in a dream, warning them not to return to Herod, leading them to go back to their country by another route.

What do we learn from all this? We realize that God reveals Himself in surprising ways, by any means He chooses, to anyone He chooses! Magi coming from a nation outside Israel to worship Jesus Christ, determined to make the journey, determined to find Him, actually found Him and worshipped Him! Their journey was a journey of faith!

We can turn to another example: The conversion of St. Paul, whose festival falls on January 25th. Here was a Jew, doing his utmost to harass Christians by arresting them and bringing them to Jerusalem. He was on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians there when suddenly, the Lord



Jesus Christ appeared to him asking why he was persecuting Him (*Acts* 9:4). Trembling and astonished, struck blind by the Lord's dazzling

Page 2 Volume 21, Issue 1

Reflecting the Epiphany of the Lord Jesus Christ in Our Lives

light, he was led by the hand to Damascus, where he fasted three days before the Lord sent Ananias to lay hands on him so that he might regain his sight. After Ananias did this, Paul was baptized, took some food, and received strength. While staying with the disciples at Damascus, he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Acts 9:20-21). We see that an epiphany of Christ to Paul on the way to Damascus wonderfully converted and changed his life! His parents had named him Saul, and in Acts 13:9 we read that he was also called Paul, and from then on Scripture refers to him as Paul. Such a great conversion in his life appropriately gave rise to his new identity in Christ—Paul! The epiphany of Christ to Paul set him on a new and perilous journey on which, instead of persecuting others for their faith in

the Lord Jesus Christ, he would suffer persecution and eventually martyrdom in Rome.

Consider also Cornelius, a Roman centurion in Caesarea, who was visited by an angel who told him that God had observed his almsgiving and listened to his prayers and that he should summon Simon Peter from Joppa to preach God's word to him (Acts 10:1-6). This was an epiphany for Cornelius, for it led to his conversion and the conversion of his relatives and friends through St. Peter's preaching of the Gospel that brings forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation to all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Even St. Peter, before he preached to Cornelius and his household. was given a revelation from the Lord that he was to treat people of all nations equally and not consider them inferior to Jews (Acts 10:9-20).

While we may speak of the Epiphany of the Lord Jesus Christ as the revelation of Him to all people through His birth in this world, God gives us epiphanies in our spir-

itual pilgrimage as we walk on the road that the Lord Jesus Christ has set before us. These epiphanies reveal more of the Lord to us as the Holy Spirit guides us into the fullness of truth (*St. John 16:13*).

What is our task as bearers of the Epiphany of the Lord Jesus Christ? God calls us to share this revelation, this Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, with others in the love of God and to continue walking with the Lord so that we may love and obey Him fully. Amen!

. – The Reverend Chris Parrish



Creator of the heavens
Who led the Magi by a star
to worship the Christ-child:
guide and sustain us
that we may find our journey's end
in in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Great Commission Campaign

ow it has been a month since the start of the Great Commission Campaign. The first step was to PRAY. We have prayed and asked the Lord for guidance, help, and strength as to how to proceed to be the best Stewards in Faith to embark on fulfilling the Great Commission.

As we continue to pray through this campaign, the next step to baptized as a child to be brought up in the faith. Or, if you were older when you made the decision to receive the Lord at baptism, you committed yourself to follow Jesus. Then you continued on your journey of faith, deciding to be confirmed and receiving the Lord's Supper.

After some serious and thoughtful prayer, we now need to add the next step in our campaign. We need to make a commitment to fulfill the Great up topics in the Bible), I found two points (with Scripture verses to validate them) that make clear what the Lord expects of all of us when we commit to Him:

But the Bible also teaches that the chief commitment of our lives is to God Himself. Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and



proceed will require a bit of commitment. COMMIT-MENT is Step Two.

I can hear you saying, "Oh no, not another commitment! I can't have another commitment, that is too much!" But don't put yourself in a tizzy. This is more of a personal commitment, a commitment between you and God.

Think of it as a renewal of the vows your parents took on your behalf before God and witnesses when you were Commission. It will strengthen our faith. None of us will be doing this alone. We all will be doing this together and will give us an opportunity to support each other as we strengthen our relationship with the Lord. It is important to commit to hold fast in our belief. Commitment will give us a foundation and guidance to proceed to the next step.

Looking in *Got-Questons.org* (a resource I like to use when looking

with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment" (*St. Matthew* 22:37-38).

Total commitment to God means that Jesus is our sole authority, our guiding light, and our unerring compass. Being committed to Christ means being fruitful; it means being a servant.

Page 4 Volume 21, Issue 1

Great

Commission...

Our axiom is simple and succinct: "For me to live is Christ" (*Philippians* 1:21).

So I am asking you to continue praying

Holy Spirit, overshadow our church with Your presence. Let Your glory be felt, drawing hearts into deeper relationship with You

Exodus 33:14

I am also asking you to make the decision with me to commit to the Lord Jesus Christ. As we are reminded every Sunday in our bulletin, *Our service begins when we leave the Chapel*. Let us all support one another and come together to make a commitment to God.

Again, I invite each of you to participate in this yearlong project to grow our church through obedience to Christ's command. I am hoping we can start a ReVive program to enhance our work in church growth. Please contact me if you would like to be part of the ReVive program.

- Julia McNeely

Vestry Matters



Welcome to the latest edition of Vestry Matters. It's good to be back with you again, and I hope you enjoyed the previous article and that you'll enjoy the current and future editions.

On behalf of the Vestry and myself, I hope you had a very merry Christmas with family and friends celebrating the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and that you will have a very blessed and happy new year, including perhaps a visit to our beautiful Chapel (hint!).

Important Reminder

We currently have two open slots on the Vestry and would welcome any volunteers who would like to serve. No prior experience is needed, and any current member of the Parish is welcome to apply. If interested, please contact either me or Father Parrish.

Here's the latest article for your reading delight and edification.

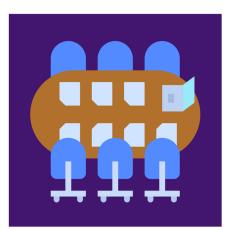
October 13th Vestry Meeting Summary

Those in attendance: Elodia Fernandez, Clark Patteson, Julia McNeely, Father Chris Parrish, Brandy Falcon, and Bridgitte Parrish.

Treasurer's Report (Elodia Fernandez):

Treasurer's Report (Elodia Fernandez):

- Backpacks payout was \$470.00.
- Maintenance Reserve: a check received was returned.
- Budget items:
 - General Collections received were at 80% of the budgeted amount.
 - Loose Plate was over budget.
 - Income for Church Flowers stood at almost 100% of budget
 - Maintenance Reserve income received was way more than budgeted.
 - Cell tower income would reach 100% of budget by the end of December.
 - Organists' Expense was lower than budget, because one organist donates their services in-kind.
 - Repair and Maintenance expenditures were higher due to dead tree branch removal.
- Samaritan's Purse donations received so far was \$180.00.
- The quarterly estimated payment of Federal Taxes had been made, and the State did not require payment of a third installment.



Vestry Matters

- The St. Luke's Investment Account
 Graph showed an increase in value of
 \$46,638.88 since the end of December
 2023.
- The Schwab Account Summary of October 11th showed a value of \$304,185.62. The cash portion has also increased.

Junior Warden's Report (Clark Patteson):

- A parishioner put down mulch in the Chapel garden.
- Clark would look into rototilling with our gardener, Long Tran.

Altar Guild Report (Elodia Fernandez):

 Elodia announced that she was training Brandy Falcon in the Altar Guild ministry.

Rector's Report (Father Parrish):

- Average service attendance as of September 29th was 17.
- Pablo, a technician from JW Heating & Air, repaired our Chapel air conditioning. A rodent had chewed through the insulation of the wire leading from the thermostat to the outside air conditioner unit. The wire had to be repaired and its insulation had to be replaced, as well as a new capacitor installed. The total cost

- of this work was \$465.00.
- water was consecrated Bishop at the Church of the Ascension, Charles Town, West Virginia, on October 4th. He and Bishop Richard Lipka are setting up a transition team to ensure a smooth transition when Bishop Darryl Fitzwater becomes the Bishop Ordinary of the Diocese.
- Clericus and Anglican Convocation of the West Synod will meet at Holy Cross Retreat Center in Mesilla, New Mexico, April 22-25, 2025: This event was announced by Father Penfield and appears in the Convocational newsletter. Both Bishop Lipka and Bishop Fitzwater plan to be there.
- Milpitas Christian School will close at the end of the school year (May 2025) and cease operations at its Birchwood Campus. Father Parrish's instructional aide and a few others had been laid off, and his hours had been cut. He now works three hours a day teaching Bible, English Language Arts, and Social Studies, and another teacher teaches Math and Science.

Old Business:

- Julia McNeely continues working on signage for the Chapel.
- Brandy Falcon suggested a better utilization of our Face-Book page to show pictures of people at our potluck lunches. Brandy said she would Facebook message Lee Ann Vojvoda, who administers our FaceBook page.
- The Vestry is constantly looking for new ideas to help grow our church. If anybody reading this has any other ideas or would like to help in this very important mission, please contact Father Parrish or any Vestry member. Even better, join us at an upcoming meeting to offer your ideas and suggestions in person. The more help and input we can get, the better. Thank you in advance.

New Business:

• Advertising: Vestry had previously decided not to advertise in the Los Altos Town Crier. Elodia Fernandez suggested we use the small advertisement listing in the Religious Services section of the Town Crier, and list the name of our church, the address, and the Sunday service time.



Page 6 Volume 21, Issue 1

Vestry Matters

Mailbox hangers for Christmas and Easter services were suggested, as well as including our Christmas services in Evite invitations by email or text.

• • •

Thank you for your time in reading this article. Please remember, this is your Vestry and this is **your** Parish, and, whether you're able to attend church services regularly or not, your input on any matter concerning the Church, its operation and its overall Mission and Purpose is essential and welcome. If there's anything you feel needs to be addressed in future meetings or even in between meetings or if you have any questions or concerns, please do reach out and contact Father Parrish and/or any member of the Vestry. We'll

be sure to address whatever you feel needs our attention as soon as practically possible.

Donations

If you're unable to join us in person but would like to make a donation to our church, please visit our website (https://StLukesChapel.or g/) and click on the DO-NATE button. Thank you in advance for helping keep this beautiful sanctuary we call our spiritual home alive. All donations are tax-deductible and are gratefully received.

We look forward to seeing you at a future service and/or meeting and I'll be back with you next month. Vestry meetings are usually held on the second Sunday of every month following the service, except for December, when no meeting is held, and February, when a short procedural meeting is held following the Annual Meeting.

I'd like to personally thank the Vestry members for all their continued hard work behind the scenes to keep our church functioning and available to all for all their spiritual needs. This is a vital, if unglamorous, ministry and we invite any and all interested parties to consider serving, so please contact me or Father Parrish if at all interested. Interest does not imply obligation, and we will provide any and all information needed to allow prospective candidates to make a full and complete evaluation of the duties and possible time commitment involved prior to making any formal commitment

Ray Boreham,Senior Warden



For the New Year

thought it might be nice to start the New Year with quotes from a booklet called *God's Alphabet*. It was written by a very great friend of ours, the Reverend Jeremy Wordsworth. John and Jeremy go back to the mid-50s when they shared the church house together in our village. At that time Jeremy was a deacon at our local parish church.

– Joanna Watney

J is for *Jesus*.

God gave Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.

Philippians 2:9-10a

A is for Author.

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfector of our faith. Hebrews 12:2

N is for Name.

So they will put My Name on the Israelites, and I will bless them

Numbers 6:27

U is for *Upright*.

Good and Upright is the Lord; Therefore He instructs sinners in His ways.

Psalm 25:8

A is for Adoption.

You have received a spirit of Adoption as sons, by which we cry out, "Abba, Father."

Romans 8:15b

R is for Resurrection.

Jesus said to [Martha], "I am the Resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die

St. John 11:25

Y is for Yoke.

Jesus said, "Take My Yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart. and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

St. Matthew 11:29-30



Page 8 Volume 21, Issue 1

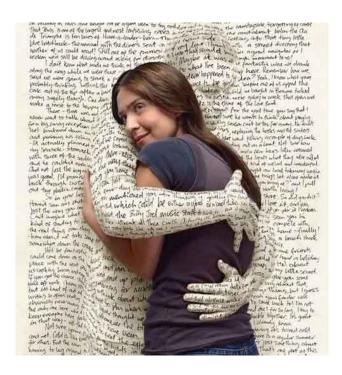
A Suggestion

a recent e-mail describing how to grow closer to God this year, one of the suggestions was to choose a theme verse for the year and say it aloud every day. We could all manage that! Suggested verses were:

- **Psalm** 90:12,
- **Psalm** 119:32,
- **Psalm** 119:133,
- *Galatians* 5:16,
- *Philippians* 1:27, and
- *Philippians* 4:6-7,

but any verse will do. As St. Paul tells us, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work". (II St. Timothy 3:16-17).

- Kim Vogel



Our Chapel Family Prayer List

This prayer list
was current as of
December 27th,
and the people
of St. Luke's
will pray
for each need
until
we are notified
that it has been met.
Please contact
Father Parrish
to add
or remove names.

Thank you!

God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech Thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that Thou wouldest be pleased to make Thy ways known unto them. Thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for Thy holy Church universal; that it may be so guided and governed by Thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to Thy fatherly goodness:

Archbishop Steve Wood, our Primate;

Bishop Richard Lipka, our Bishop Ordinary;

Bishop Darryl Fitzwater, our Bishop Co-adjutor;

Canon Michael Penfield, our Vicar-General;

Father Chris Parrish, our Rector;

Deacon Peter Vogel; and

Deacon Linda Bracken; also all those who serve

also all those who serve as Thy ministers in governing our nation and state, particularly:

President Joe Biden;

President-elect Donald Trump; and

Governor Gavin Newsom;

as well as all those who are any ways afflicted, or

distressed, in mind, body, or estate; especially those for whom our prayers are desired:

the soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, guardians, border patrol, coasties, police officers, firefighters, and pilots who protect us every day;

our persecuted Christian brothers and sisters throughout the world;

all refugees;

the leaders and people of Ukraine;

all who are affected by the war between Hamas and Israel;

the Iranian people;

all those affected by natural disasters both here and abroad;

Jim and Edna Davis;

Joya de Rossett;

Debbie:

Scott;

Brittany;

Tanya Theiler;

Mark Quinn;

Lisa;

Ben;

Marian;

Flo;

Max;

Dan and Kendra Pack;

the Stanko family; Yoshihiko Ikegami;

Mary Frances Reaves;

Mrs. Kitt;

Jon Carter;

Linda Capone;

Rose Handwerker;

Ann and Frank MacVoy;

Bishop Ilgenfritz;

Moe Martinez;

Victoria Grace:

Christina:

John and Heidi Donnelly:

Carl:

Judith Boreham;

Heather:

Susan;

Helen Vanderberg;

Farshad:

Deacon Herman and Betty Roark;

Patrick Slattery;

Julie Sine;

the Slattery family;

James Kitchin:

Father Jonah and Rachel Kelman:

Bob Willis:

Grace Driver:

Robbie Tavey;

Charlotte;

the Bouchard family;

Rachel Jebaraj;

Sara and Hesam; and

Molly Ferguson;

that it may please Thee to comfort and relieve them, according to their several necessities; giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Page 10 Volume 21, Issue 1

A Prayer for the Middle East

od of all comfort and hope, Who in Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, proclaimed good news to the poor, bound up the broken-hearted, and set the captives free: We remember before You this day all who are affected by the violence of October 7, 2023, and we ask You to heal the wounded, comfort those who mourn, and bring justice and peace to the land of Israel. Look with mercy upon the peoples of the Middle East, that, in Your great compassion, the light of Christ may shine in the darkness and bring hope to every nation. As Simeon rejoiced to see Your salvation, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel, so we pray that Jesus, the Messiah, would be known as the true hope for all the earth. May Your Kingdom come, and may Your peace reign in every heart, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen*.



A Prayer for Our Congregation

GOD, Holy Ghost, Sanctifier of the faithful, visit, we pray Thee, the Congregation of St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills with Thy love and favour; enlighten our minds more and more with the light of the everlasting Gospel; graft in our hearts a love of the truth; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and of Thy great mercy keep us in the same, O blessed Spirit, whom, with the Father and the Son together, we worship and glorify as one God, world without end. Amen.

Parish Postings

Please join us on Saturday, January 11th, at 11:00 AM to take down and store the Christmas decorations.



The Vestry will meet on Sunday, January 12th, after fellowship. All are welcome to attend!



Joanna's Prayer Circle will meet on Sunday, January 26th, after fellowship. All are welcome to join this informal prayer group!

Page 12 Volume 21, Issue 1

Parish Postings



St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills will have its Annual Parish Meeting on Sunday, February 9th, following the worship service. The Annual Meeting is an opportunity to hear reports from our clergy, parish officers, and ministerial leaders; to review and approve an Operating Budget for 2025; and to elect Vestry members. It is very important that we all make every effort to attend this meeting, so please make plans now to join us!



The Right Reverend Darryl Fitzwater will be installed as Bishop Ordinary of the Missionary Diocese of All Saints on March 21st at 6:00 PM. The installation ceremony will take place at Church of the Ascension in Charles Town, West Virginia. Everyone is invited to attend. Please see Father Parrish for details.

Parish Postings



Bishop Darryl Fitzwater

The Anglican Convocation of the West will have its Clericus and Synod April 22nd-25th. A Women's Retreat will meet during the Clericus. These three events will convene in Mesilla, New Mexico. If you would like to attend, please see Kim Vogel for details.



Page 14 Volume 21, Issue 1

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, January 1st

The Circumcision of Christ First Day of AD 2025

Sunday, January 5th

The Second Sunday of Christmas

Holy Communion with Holy Unction
10:00 AM

Monday, January 6th

The Epiphany *or* the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles

Saturday, January 11th

Work Party to put away the Christmas decorations 11:00 AM

Sunday, January 12th

The First Sunday after Epiphany

Morning Prayer 10:00 AM

Vestry Meeting following fellowship

Sunday, January 19th

The Second Sunday after Epiphany

Holy Communion 10:00 AM

Sunday, January 26th

The Third Sunday after Epiphany

Holy Communion 10:00 AM

Joanna's Prayer Circle Meeting following fellowship

Sunday, February 2nd

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple
The Third Sunday after Epiphany
Holy Communion with Holy Unction
10:00 AM



The Hillside Messenger

A PUBLICATION OF ST. LUKE'S CHAPEL IN THE HILLS ANGLICAN CHURCH

A Parish of
THE CONVOCATION OF THE WEST,
PART OF THE
MISSIONARY DIOCESE OF
ALL SAINTS IN
THE ANGLICAN CHURCH
IN NORTH AMERICA

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ChristopherParrish7@gmail.com Deacon Vogel's cellular: 408-569-7067 e-mail: vogel.peter@gmail.com

Website: www.StLukesChapel.org «AddressBlock»

Worship Schedule

St.

Luke's Chapel in the Hills is a traditional Anglican parish which uses the 1928 edition *Book of Common Prayer*. We invite you to join us for worship and fellowship soon!

"A place where the Bible is taught."



Biblical in teaching. Liturgical in worship. Loving in practice.

First, third, and fifth Sundays of each month

Holy Communion (with Healing Service on First Sundays) 10:00 AM

Second and fourth Sundays each month

Office of Daily Morning Prayer 10:00 AM

Please note that Holy Communion will be celebrated on Feast Days occurring on second and fourth Sundays.

If you cannot join us physically in the Chapel, please contact Father Parrish to be added to each service's Zoom invitation.