

The Episcopal Church of St. Martin
ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE WEEK OF December 1, 2024

This Week

A Special Treat for Families! Las Posadas during 10am Service

This Sunday, at the 10am First Sunday service, we will celebrate *Las Posadas*. *Las Posadas* commemorates the journey that Joseph and Mary made from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of a safe place to have the baby Jesus. In place of the Liturgy of the Word, we'll have an interactive, music-filled procession, where parents and children can follow the Holy Family on their search for welcome and sanctuary. **Note that there will be no readings and no sermon at this service** (but the 8am Eucharist will follow the regular pattern of worship). After the 10am service, stay for a festive coffee hour. If possible, bring cookies for coffee hour.

Special note to parents: The nursery will be closed this Sunday, but we really hope you will feel comfortable having your little ones in church with you this week. The service at 10am will be shorter and more interactive than usual, and nobody will mind if your children fuss. Please join us for this special day!

Music Notes for Sunday, December 1

As you read above, this Sunday we celebrate the first Sunday of Advent with *Las Posadas*! As we re-enact the Holy Family's search for hospitality in Bethlehem, we will be condensing into one worship service a festival that is usually stretched over nine nights from December 16 to December 24. Each night, the Holy Family knocks at the door of a different house where a fiesta is taking place, but not until Christmas Eve are they invited inside. *Las Posadas* is widely observed in Mexico, other Latin American countries, and among Hispanic communities in the United States. The *Las Posadas* song is a call-and-response between two groups, one representing the pilgrims (Mary and Joseph) and the other representing the innkeepers. Our children and others of the Pop-Up Choir will be asked to accompany the pilgrim group, while the congregation will take the part of the innkeepers. The tradition and its song date back to the 16th century, when Spanish missionaries in Mexico began adapting Christian teachings to include local cultural practices, while at the same time, indigenous people adapted local practices to include Christian teachings. Over time, the song and the celebration evolved into a seamless blend of indigenous and Spanish traditions. The tune and lyrics vary slightly by region, reflecting local customs and musical styles. The song emphasizes the spirit of *Las Posadas*: community, religious devotion, and the importance of welcome and inclusion.

The Weary World Rejoices: Group Study and Conversation on Sundays during Advent

From 11:30am to 12:30pm on **December 1, 8, 15, and 22**, we'll gather in Room 6/7 to discuss **The Weary World Rejoices: A Journey Towards the Promise of Christmas**. This resource is from acclaimed author and podcaster Kate Bowler, known for facing the hard realities of life with humor and faith. As Kate puts it, "Advent calls us to live in the tension between the 'already' and the 'not yet.' It's about sitting with the messiness of life while holding onto the promise of what's to come. This year, we invite you to embrace Advent and Christmas as they truly are—imperfect, beautiful, and real." Join us for any or all the sessions during Advent as we explore the themes of truth, compassion, restoration, and justice. **No homework required**—just come as you are, when you can. **This Sunday, December 1, we focus on the Advent promise of truth.** All are welcome!

A Change in Communion Bread at 10am Services

Beginning this Sunday, December 1, we will be offering ONLY homemade gluten-free bread at the 10am service instead of the option of wheat wafers and gluten-free wafers. The two stations for Communion will remain the same. On the left, the gluten-free bread will be dipped in the wine and placed on your hand. On the right, you will receive the gluten-free bread and then go to drink from the chalice, if you wish. Parishioner Carla Harris and a very small number of others will be baking the bread, using gluten-free areas and utensils with no cross-contamination. If you have questions, please reach out to Rev. Pamela (pamela@churchofstmartin.org).

Next Week

A Voice in the Wilderness: A New Kind of Advent Lessons and Carols

On December 8 at 4pm, we will present a new kind of Advent Lessons and Carols, “A Voice in the Wilderness.” The service features traditional Advent scripture lessons paired with selections from the writings of John Muir, an early conservationist influential in the establishment of our National Park system. A deeply spiritual person, Muir’s writings reflect a sacred connection with the natural world, which he saw as both a place of learning about God (“nature’s Bible”) and a place of worship (“God’s first temples”). We will be joined by the Barefoot All-Stars Viol Collective (a viola da gamba consort) and by counter-tenor Andrew Hudson. The Sanctuary Choir will also present several settings of poems by e.e. cummings, Gaia Willis-Owen, and Wendell Berry, while the congregation will sing familiar Advent hymns and carols.

In these days of climate change and charged public discourse, it is good to remember that, whatever our diverse opinions, we literally stand upon a common ground. “A Voice in the Wilderness” reminds us of that. The service is not offered merely as an exploration of Advent through the lens of creation care, but as a way to see Creation itself—through the themes of Advent—as a direct expression of Emmanuel, “God is with us.”

St. Martin’s Advent and Christmas Schedule

Sunday, December 1: First Sunday and Las Posadas at 10am Service. Festive coffee hour afterwards. Bring cookies if you wish.

Sunday, December 8: Advent Lessons and Carols at 4pm with reception following.

Sunday, December 22: Greening of the Church for Christmas after the 10am service.

Sunday, December 22: Blue Christmas service at 4pm with reception following.

Tuesday, December 24: Christmas Eve. 3pm Christmas Eucharist with Pageant; 7pm and 10pm Festive Choral Christmas Eucharists.

Wednesday, December 25: Christmas Day Eucharist with Christmas Carols at 10am.

Sunday, December 29: Holy Eucharist at 10am; one service only.

Other Important Updates

Walk in Love Stewardship Season

We have received 109 pledges to date. You can see our progress on posters at the front of the parish hall. A pledge, which is a commitment to donate at a later date, helps us greatly in creating a realistic budget for next year. **If you haven’t submitted your pledge, you can still do so.** Fill out a pledge card and put it in the offering plate. Or you can email us your pledge at stewardship@churchofstmartin.org. St. Martin’s is supported almost entirely by the financial

gifts of our parishioners and friends. We are very grateful for all pledges and for all of you who are considering pledging.

Christine Blanchard Thanksgiving Project - Thank You!

Thanks to your generosity, we raised \$7,000 for the Thanksgiving Project. Grocery store gift cards were distributed to Davis Joint Unified School District, Davis Community Meals and Housing, the Yolo Healthy Aging Alliance, and the AB 540/Undocumented Student Center at UC Davis. Thank you, St. Martin's!

Readers, Ushers, and Others Needed for December Services

We need readers, ushers and other liturgical ministers (ushers, Eucharistic ministers, acolytes) for many of our December services, including Lessons and Carols, Blue Christmas, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. Sign up here: <https://stmartinsdavis.tiny.us/worshippsignup>

Stained-Glass Window Restoration and Timeline Change

As our rector reported last week, our first Sunday back in the church is now scheduled for December 22, the fourth Sunday of Advent. The additional time needed is not because the initial estimate to clean and restore our ceiling stained-glass window was off the mark. Most of the additional time needed is for an important final step, which wasn't in the original plan, but we think is critical for the long term. Nzilani will be placing a super strong netting beneath the window. This netting would hold any glass pieces that might fall in the future, despite the repair work now being done. The netting is not only for us but also for future generations of this church. It is very fine and will barely be visible from the floor of the church.

It is sad that some of the special events we planned for December will either be rescheduled or will take place in the parish hall instead of our beautiful sanctuary. Still, Advent is the season of waiting and anticipation, so we will be living our Advent in an especially profound way this year. Please feel free to reach out with questions.

Practicing PEACE With All Your Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind

You're invited to join a *Living Compass* Advent group to discuss scripture, prayers, and reflections around the theme of Peace. The Rev. Anne Dryden McKeever will lead the Zoom group Mondays from 12pm - 1:30pm on December 2, 9, 16, and 23. Please email the office (info@churchofstmartin.org) to be put in touch with Rev. Anne and to receive the Zoom link.

Pre-Christmas Events at St. Luke's, Woodland

Christmas Bazaar and Bake Sale: Saturday, December 14, 10am - 2pm

Holiday Organ Concert: Sunday, December 15, 2pm, \$25 at the door or in advance at

<https://stlukeswoodland.org/events>

Every Person. Every Week. One Item of Food.

The Social Justice and Outreach non-perishable food item collection is one way you can help those in need. We deliver food to four locations on a weekly rotating basis: Dixon Family Services, The Belfry and CA House, STEAC, and the UC Davis Pantry. For The Belfry, please bring toiletries, such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, and other such items. Our motto is *Every Person. Every Week. One Item of Food.* Thanks for your support!

Prayer Opportunities on Weekdays

Morning Prayer: Wednesdays, 8:30am in Room 8. Join Rev. Pamela and others for this 25-minute service.

Centering Prayer: Wednesdays, 5pm in Room 6/7. Join Kim Andrup and others for this 60-minute session.

Compline: Fridays, 8:30pm on Zoom. Join Deacon Margaret and others for this 20-minute service. Find the Zoom link on our website under “Worship.”

Meetings and Office Hours

Upcoming Meeting Dates

Choir Practice: Thursday, December 5 at 6:30pm in the parish hall

Vestry: Monday, December 16 at 7pm in the church library

Buildings & Grounds: Tuesday, December 17 at 4pm on Zoom

Social Justice & Outreach: Monday, January 27 at 5:15pm on Zoom

Rector’s Office Hours

Rev. Pamela holds office hours on Mondays. Her next office hours will be **Monday, December 2, from 3:00 to 4:30pm.** If you’d like to meet with Rev. Pamela at a different time, you can email her (pamela@churchofstmartin.org) or the office (info@churchofstmartin.org).

Prayer Request Submissions: <https://tinyurl.com/StMsPrayerRequest> or contact the church office.

Church Office Hours

We are open Monday - Friday 9am to 12pm. Stop by in person or contact the office at 530-756-0444 or info@churchofstmartin.org.