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The Fourth Sunday of Advent

## From Father Douglas

Dear People of St Andrew's Parish,

I hope you are doing well.

Typically, at the Holy Eucharist, in response to the lesson from the Old Testament, we sing or say a psalm: a selection from the 'hymnal of Scripture' that amplifies or interprets the words we have just heard. But during Advent this year we have, instead, been singing or saying a canticle: a song that appears somewhere in Scripture (Old or New Testament) other than the Book of Psalms.

On the First and Third Sundays of Advent there were two canticles from Isaiah: songs of prospective joy—of present trust and anticipated security—that echoed throughout ancient Israel's long and varied history. On the Second and Fourth Sundays, the canticles were (and will be) from the Gospel of Luke: the Song of Zechariah (traditionally called the *Benedictus*; *BCP*, p 92), which John the Baptist's father sings when his son is presented in the temple eight days after his birth; and the Song of Mary (the *Magnificat*; *BCP*, p 91), which the Blessed Virgin Mary sings when she visits her cousin Elizabeth (John's mother) while both of them are expecting.

Both are beloved canticles in the Anglican tradition, and together, I think, they show forth the full promise of Advent ... of our expectancy of Our Lord's coming, and coming again.

- Zechariah's praise of God centers on God's rescue of God's people ... on God's fulfilling the covenant made with Israel: to "come to God's people and set them free" and "guide our feet into the way of peace." This is the *salvation* hope of Advent—that both at Christ's First Coming and at His

Second, humanity will be freed of the bonds of sin and granted a lasting (if, right now, a seemingly ephemeral) peace.

- Mary, in contrast, sings of the re-ordering that God will work—and commissions us, as Jesus' followers, to work—in this world so that it reflects the will of God for humanity: lifting up those who are lowly and filling the hungry with good things. This is the *justice* hope of Advent. Mary's song hymns salvation not in the key of redemption and eternal life, but of balance and equity. And, as such, it is a harder song to hear, for while the oppressed are restored, the proud are scattered; the mighty are cast down; and the rich are sent away empty.

We'd rather not think much about this last part, wouldn't we? Why couldn't God's vision be that everyone gets to keep whatever they already have; and then, some are 'topped up' so they, too, have enough? But what Mary the Godbearer understands is that Jesus comes not just to save us, but also to commission us; not just to comfort us, but also to put us to work ... that our full acceptance of Jesus' *promised* hope includes our *effecting* that hope, in tangible, meaningful ways, in this world.

As we enter this last week of Advent and turn toward the Nativity, I invite you to reflect in prayer ... in conversation ... in dedication ... on Mary's Song. As we prepare to accept the gift of the Manger, what gifts will we bring to it, as well? For Mary not only embraced the salvation the Angel Gabriel had announced to her, but also dedicated her body—and, in the years that lay ahead, her life—to helping the world realize (*i.e.*, *real-ize*; make real) it.

Take good care, and may God continue to bless the work of the Kingdom you are doing.

In the peace and love of Christ,  
Douglas+

[Frdouglas.sak@gmail.com](mailto:Frdouglas.sak@gmail.com)

860-592-0171 (rectory, and *also* rings on mobile)

## This Week at St Andrew's

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|                       |  |          |
|-----------------------|--|----------|
| Friday, 17 December   | Prayer & Meditation ( <i>Nave</i> )  | 5:30 pm  |
| Saturday, 18 December | Choir Rehearsal ( <i>Choir Room</i> )  | 9:30 am  |
| Sunday, 19 December   | Holy Eucharist: <i>Advent 4</i> ( <i>in person only</i> )                                    | 8:30 am  |
| Sunday, 19 December   | Holy Eucharist: <i>Advent 4</i> ( <i>with music</i> ) ( <i>in person and live-streamed</i> ) | 10:30 am |
| Sunday, 19 December   | Coffee Hour ( <i>Great Room</i> )  | 11:35 am |

|                        |   |            |
|------------------------|---|------------|
| Sunday, 19 December    | Vestry Meeting ( <i>Library</i> )   | 12:00 noon |
| Saturday, 19 December  | Blue Christmas Service (held jointly with First Congregational, in their sanctuary) | 5:00 pm    |
| Monday, 20 December    | Stewardship Commission  | 1:00 pm    |
| Tuesday, 22 December   | Holy Eucharist: <i>Feast of St Thomas (in person and live-streamed)</i>             | 6:00 pm    |
| Wednesday, 22 December | Mid-Week Holy Eucharist ( <i>in person and live-streamed</i> )                      | 6:00 pm    |
| Wednesday, 22 December | A.A. for Women ( <i>Zoom meeting; email us for info</i> )                           | 7:00 pm    |
| Thursday, 23 December  | A.A. Meeting ( <i>Parish House</i> )  | 7:30 am    |
| Thursday, 23 December  | Al-Anon Meeting ( <i>Old Vestry Room</i> )  | 7:00 pm    |

## Mark Your Calendars for These Events...

Details about each of these events can be found later in this issue of the *Epistle*

|                       |  |          |
|-----------------------|--|----------|
| Friday, 24 December   | Family Christmas Eve Eucharist ( <i>in-person and live-streamed</i> )      | 4:00 pm  |
| Friday, 24 December   | Traditional Christmas Eve Eucharist ( <i>in-person and live-streamed</i> ) | 9:00 pm  |
| Saturday, 25 December | Holy Eucharist: <i>Feast of the Nativity (in-person and live-streamed)</i> | 10:00 am |
| Friday, 31 December   | New Year's Eve Service of Self-Dedication                                  | 6:00 pm  |

## St Andrew's Current COVID Status

### THE PARISH IS OPEN.

- Pursuant to CDC guidelines, we are asking **everyone to wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status**, because the level of community transmission in Litchfield County is **Substantial** (or higher)

- There is congregational singing, at the 10:30 service only

We will continue to livestream our 10:30 liturgy on Sundays and our mid-week services, as there are parishioners who are choosing not to be in group settings at this time—a decision the parish fully honors and supports.

## Christmas Memorial Flowers



We are happy to receive donations for poinsettias to adorn the church for Christmas and throughout Christmastide. These may be made in memory (or in honor) of a loved one. The names of all those being remembered and honored will be included in our bulletins on Christmas Eve and on Sunday, 26 December.

Please submit your donations to the parish office, either by email ([st.andrew.kent@snet.net](mailto:st.andrew.kent@snet.net)) or phone (860-927-3486) by **Monday, 20 December**. A check for your donation (\$50 is suggested) may follow in the offering plate or by mail.

## Afghan Refugee Resettlement: An Update from the St Andrew's Team



As most of you know, St Andrew's has committed to help resettle a refugee family. Our team is moving ahead with finding and furnishing appropriate housing and has made great progress. We have joined with Washington, CT's, team and are coordinating efforts, resources and responsibilities. We will need to put a house together in the short period of time between getting the "green light" from the CT refugee agency (which we haven't yet), and the time the family arrives.

In the next few weeks, we ask you to think about any donations of larger furniture items you may have to give away: items in good condition that one would normally find in a home—new or lightly used bed frames (we cannot accept mattresses), bureaus, sofas, tables, chairs, shelving, lamps, side tables, etc., to welcome our family. If you think you have appropriate items, please note down the dimensions and take some pictures. We will pass along an email address to send them to, in a week or two.

We also ask your understanding that, because of our community's generosity, we may not be able to accept all items, especially if they are duplicates. In the meantime, know that we appreciate your willingness to help a new family that has had to flee its home country to find safety in ours.

## GONE! Another Very Successful Christmas Tree Sale



The North Lawn is once again devoid of trees. Well, not all trees, of course (!), but of all 215 trees that we took delivery of on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. We sold out this past Sunday, and we also contributed more than a dozen trees to the Kent Food Bank to give away to its clients.

Many, many thanks to **Chris Rehkow** for heading this up; to **Peter Messer** and **Michael Ward** for setting up all the stands and lights; to *everyone* who helped unload and sell; and, most importantly, to everyone who purchased a tree. Thank you!!

## A Quieter Expression of the Season: Blue Christmas Service, This Sunday



The joy the Christ Child brings to Christmas is universal, but not everyone experiences or expresses it the same way. Some of us feel the sting of grief—new or old—particularly at this time of year. Some of us are facing difficult challenges or decisions ... have lost something precious to us ... will be separated from loved ones or beloved traditions this year ... are coping with a final or chronic illness (or love someone who is). The content of each heart is unique as it approaches the Manger, and we must take care to honor this, especially in a secular culture that often contrives joy and refuses to countenance sorrow at this time of year.

Therefore, in what we hope will become an annual tradition, St Andrew's and the First Congregational Church will jointly hold a Blue Christmas Service this Sunday, 19 December, at 5:00 pm. This year we will gather in FCC's sanctuary and next year in St Andrew's nave. (A light reception will follow.)

If you seek some quiet prayer, some space for sorrow, a community of care, or a message of hope-within-sadness, please consider attending. And if this is too great a struggle for you, let Fr Douglas know, and he will carry your prayer requests to the service for you.

## NEW: Christmas Diaper Drive, Hosted by ECCT Deacons



During Christmas we celebrate God coming to us in human form as the Baby Jesus, wrapped in swaddling clothes. This Christmas, in keeping our Baptismal Covenant to *care for those who are in need and respect the dignity of all* (BCP, p 305), the Diocese's deacons invite you to participate in an ECCT-wide diaper drive to benefit **The Diaper Bank of Connecticut**.

Did You Know?

- The Diaper Bank works to bring basic health needs, including **75,000 diapers each week**, to low-income individuals in our state who are struggling to make ends meet.
- Most clients who frequent the diaper bank **do not have laundry facilities, and laundromats do not allow the washing of cloth diapers.**
- Prior to the pandemic, **one in three Connecticut families couldn't afford enough diapers** for their infants and toddlers, and the need has skyrocketed over the past year.
- Diapers can cost **up to \$100 a month** and for those who have no choice but to buy them at local convenience stores rather than big-box retailers, the cost can be even higher.
- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (**SNAP**) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (**WIC**) **do not cover the cost of diapers.**
- Without an adequate supply of clean diapers, **babies are more likely to suffer from diaper rash, urinary tract infections and other medical problems.**

No one should have to worry about affording these basic needs.

How can you participate?

- Bring a package of diapers (sizes 3-6) to your parish's services on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Christmas 1 (Sunday, 26 December), Christmas 2 (Sunday, 02 January) or the Epiphany (Thursday, 06 January).
- Make a financial donation to [The Diaper Bank of Connecticut](#) and note "ECCT Diaper Drive" in the "Memo" line.

**Now Available:  
2022 Liturgical Calendars**





Well, fear not! On Sunday, 09 January, during Coffee Hour, our own Katherine Almquist will offer a very brief lesson on how to make coffee in the Parish House kitchen. It's actually much easier than you may think! Please come on by and see what's perking!

## Save the Date: Annual Meeting of the Parish, Sunday, 06 February



Mark your calendars: The parish's Annual Meeting will be held on **Sunday, 06 February, 2022**, immediately after the 10:30 Eucharist. The annual reports of the Priest-in-Charge, the Senior Warden, the Treasurer and the commissions will be received; new officers and four new vestry members will be elected; and the budget for 2022 will be presented. (The snow date will be Sunday, 13 February.)

## Help Support the Kent Food Bank



Please help our parish family continue to support of the Kent Food Bank by sending a check in any amount to:

Kent Community Fund  
P O Box 262  
Kent, CT 06757

These funds will be used to purchase vouchers for local families in need, under the direction of Kent's Social Services Director, Leah Pullaro. In addition, Leah has told us how useful it is for her to have IGA gift cards to give to families who are in need. Please consider purchasing a card, for \$25 or \$50, and taking it to Leah's office in Town Hall or dropping it in the donations basket in the Narthex. (You can also place it in the offering plate, marked for the Food Bank.)

The Kent Food Bank also accepts food donations. They are especially in need of staples such as **beans, rice, tea, coffee, sugar, nuts, hot & cold breakfast cereals, peanut butter, jellies, jams and tuna**. Make certain that the 'Best by ...' dates are not past! Please remember that the Food Bank accepts pet foods as well!

You may drop off food items on Thursdays from 9:00 to 12:00 in the back of the Community House on Main Street. You may also place donations in the basket in the church Narthex or in the bin in the breezeway at the rear of the Rectory.

## Lections for this Week

### The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Year C

Micah 5:2-5a  
Canticle 15  
Hebrews 10:5-10  
Luke 1:39-45



## Past Services and Homilies

Please click on the link below in order to view past services on YouTube and to read homilies from previous Sundays located on our website.

[Homilies and Past Services](#)

## Worship Services

-Sunday-

### Holy Eucharist

8.30 a.m. & 10.30 a.m.  
Rite I at 8.30, First Sundays;  
Healing Service at 8.30,  
Third Sunday  
In person  
8.30 a.m. & 10.30 a.m.  
(10.30 a.m. available live  
stream on YouTube)



**-Wednesday-**  
**Holy Eucharist**  
6.00 p.m.



**-Friday-**  
**Prayer & Meditation**  
5.30 p.m.



**-Holy Days-**  
**Holy Eucharist**  
6.00 p.m.

## 12 Step Meetings

**Wednesdays**  
A.A. for Women 7:00 p.m.  
*Zoom meeting*  
*email us for info.*

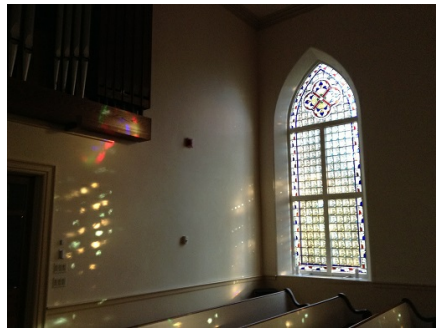
**Thursdays**  
A.A. at 7.30 a.m.  
(Parish House)  
*resumed*  
Al-Anon. at 7.00 p.m.  
(Old Vestry Room)  
*resumed*

**Fridays**  
A.A. at 8 p.m.  
(Great Room)  
*temporarily until First Church opens*  
*resumed*



## Parish Staff

**The Rev Douglas S  
Worthington,  
Priest in Charge  
[frdouglas.sak@gmail.com](mailto:frdouglas.sak@gmail.com)  
860-592-0171**



**Thomas W Holcombe,  
Organist & Director of Choirs**

**KC Compton,  
Parish Administrator**

**Joan I Cassel  
Financial Secretary**

**Randy Osolin,  
Verger**



**St Andrew's Church  
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1 N. Main St.  
Kent, CT 06757**

**860.927.3486  
[st.andrew.kent@snet.net](mailto:st.andrew.kent@snet.net)**

**Parish office open everyday except Friday from 10 am- 5 pm  
(2 pm on Thursdays)**

**Visit St Andrew's website at  
[www.standrewskentct.org](http://www.standrewskentct.org)**

**The Episcopal Church in Connecticut  
[www.ctepiscopal.org](http://www.ctepiscopal.org)**

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