

THE SEASON OF ADVENT

HOLY EUCHARIST



ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
4 FOUNTAIN SQUARE
LARCHMONT, NY 10538

Welcome to St. John's Church. We are glad you have joined us for worship.

*For everyone's safety and comfort, we thank you for maintaining appropriate social distance.
Masks are required for all attendees, regardless of vaccination status.*

*If you are visiting or looking for a new church home, please introduce yourself to our clergy
or an usher. Children are welcome and encouraged to participate in our worship services.
Thank you for turning off your cell phones.*

Visit our website for our full schedule of our worship services (stjohnslarchmont.org).

*If you have a pastoral emergency and need to speak with a priest when the office is closed,
you may contact the Rev. Lisa Mason on her personal cell phone at (210) 854-4811.*

AN INSTRUCTED EUCHARIST

We hope to at least begin to answer the questions “Why do we do what we do?” and “What does it mean that we do this?”

The context of our liturgy this morning, and every Sunday morning, is our principal act of worship as Anglicans—the Eucharist. “Eucharist” comes from a Greek word that means “to give thanks.” We may think of the Eucharist as an exclusively Christian idea, but our entire service is actually based on centuries of Jewish tradition. There are two Jewish customs surrounding meals that our Eucharist is based on: a rich remembering (our participation in the old story) within the context of a meal shared around a table which we call the memorial sacrifice, and the custom of sharing a meal with God, called the sacrifice of thanksgiving.

In some ways, our liturgy is a drama enacted each time we gather with the hopes of drawing closer to God and to one another as we together encounter the presence of the risen Christ among us. To help us experience this co-union or communion, we use many symbols. Symbols are signs that participate in the reality that they represent. All symbols work at a visceral level. The symbols we use in the Eucharist follow a pattern and form a ritual. Rituals help us experience and express things that cannot be easily verbalized.

As we journey through the theologies and logistics of our Eucharistic liturgy this morning, we will call your attention to some of our parts of the liturgy, and the symbols and details of our rituals. We begin with a prelude to call us into worship physically and spiritually, followed by an opening hymn. The procession of ministers originates in the body of people gathered, reminding us that all our ministers, including the clergy, come from within this body. The procession is led by the cross, its way lit by candles, as all are led by the cross of Christ, their way lit by his light.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

As the seasons of the church year change, different additions may be made to the liturgy to emphasize a particular season. In Advent, we add the lighting of the Advent wreath that reminds us of the different people on the journey to Bethlehem. Each week an additional candle is lit until the Christ candle is lit on Christmas. The first week, the candle reminds us of the prophets who pointed the way to Bethlehem and all that God was preparing to do in the world. The second candle reminds us of the Holy Family. The third candle is a different color, and reminds us of Mary’s “Yes” to God, and the Shepherds, who received the message of what God was doing in Bethlehem that night, and they went. The fourth candle reminds us of the Wise Men who followed the star to Bethlehem and bowed down before Jesus.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Now we begin that part of our service we call “The Liturgy of the Word.” Part two, “The Liturgy of the Table,” will come later. The Liturgy of the Word finds its origins in an ancient Jewish synagogue service with prayers and readings of Holy Scripture. Essentially, this portion of our liturgy forms a dramatic dialogue between God and God’s people in which God speaks to us and we respond to God. It begins with a greeting that acclaims God as the head of this gathering, followed by a prayer for purity in our worship here, and a hymn of praise to God.

LITURGY OF THE WORD: THE WORD OF GOD

PRELUDE

A musical prelude may be offered as we gather, to help us center ourselves and prepare for worship.

Singing has been integral to the entire history of Judeo-Christian worship, at least since the psalmist instructed us to “Sing to the Lord a new song” in Psalm 96; in fact, “sing to the Lord” is the most frequent command in the Bible. Why do we sing in worship? Adding music to texts helps us remember the texts we sing; melodies get stuck in our minds in a way that words alone do not. Singing also draws a body of people together in ways no other activity does. Numerous studies have shown that the hearts of people who sing together literally start beating together – singing helps us become “one body” like nothing else. What do we sing? We pick hymns (songs that everyone – congregation, clergy, and choir – all sing together) that comment in some way on the day’s readings. Our hymns come primarily from the Hymnal 1982, but we occasionally use hymns from other sources as well. We strive to sing hymns from every time period (from Gregorian chant written a thousand years ago to contemporary texts written just a few years ago) and every part of the Anglican Communion and beyond. We also intentionally sing hymns that are old favorites and hymns that we’ve never sung before (and everything in between!). As we begin the season of Advent, all of our hymns in some way muse on our preparation for Christ’s birth.

OPENING HYMN

All stand and sing the hymn as the ministers enter.

OPENING ACCLAMATION

BCP p.358

All remain standing.

Celebrant ✠ Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be **God’s kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

COLLECT FOR PURITY

All remain standing.

Celebrant Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

During the season of Advent, at the time we traditionally sing the Gloria, we are instead singing the more penitential Kyrie, using the setting by William Mathias.

KYRIE (#S-98)

All remain standing.

Lord, have mer - cy.

Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.

Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

The musical score is written on four staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is simple, with notes corresponding to the lyrics 'Lord, have mer - cy.' The second staff continues the melody with the lyrics 'Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.' The third staff features a more complex melody with the lyrics 'Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.' The fourth staff concludes the piece with the lyrics 'Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.'

Music: William Mathias (1934-1992)

We now move to the Collect of the Day. The word “collect” comes from a Latin word which means “to sum together.” In other words, a collect collects all our prayers and thoughts and sums them up in one prayer. It begins with an ancient greeting that the early followers of Christ shared with one another.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Let us pray.

All Amen.

THE LESSONS

The Liturgy of the Word now continues with the first lesson, a reading from the Hebrew Scriptures, or the Old Testament. Each Sunday has different readings assigned. The Episcopal Church uses a three year cycle of readings that is common to all Episcopal churches across the country, called a lectionary. The purpose of our cycle is so that in the course of three years, if you’ve been in church every Sunday, you will hear almost the entire Bible.

The Hebrew Scripture is followed by a psalm, followed by another reading, this time from one of the Epistles, or letters, in the New Testament. We then sing a “gospel hymn”—or “sequence hymn”—as we process the gospel out to read among the people. In the Gospel reading, we hear the stories of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

THE FIRST LESSON

All are seated.

Reader A reading from _____.

After the reading:

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

THE PSALM RESPONSE

All remain seated. "Responsively by the half verse" means that the leader will read the verse to the asterisk(), and the congregation will read the rest of the verse in unison.*

Reader The portion of the Psalter appointed for this morning is from Psalm _____. Let us read it responsively by the half-verse.

THE SECOND LESSON

All remain seated.

Reader A reading from _____.

After the reading:

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

SEQUENCE HYMN

THE HOLY GOSPEL

All stand for the Gospel.

Celebrant ✠ The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew/Mark/Luke/John.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

After the reading:

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ

The Sermon follows this reading as a response to the Gospel and is usually an explanation of the Gospel and the other readings. Our preachers preach, not because they are the wisest or most holy among our congregation, but because the Church has chosen them, schooled them in the Scriptures, theology, and traditions of our Church, and authorized them to help the rest of us wrestle with the word of God and what God's Spirit might be saying to us as God's people.

Now we all stand and affirm our faith in the words of the Nicene Creed. First drafted in 325 C.E., this creed is a statement of our faith. The reason that we say it all together, as one body, is a critical part of our Episcopal understanding of community: on the days in which some have trouble believing all that the creed states, others stand beside them and affirm our belief in it for all of us. This is the true meaning of community: we help each other stand when alone we could not, and we support one another in this journey of faith, no matter where we find ourselves.

THE NICENE CREED

BCP p.358

All stand.

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.

As we continue the dialogue with God, our response now takes the form of the Prayers of the People. The prayers listed in the Book of Common Prayer are intended as guidelines, not as default prayers that must be used. The only stipulation is that the six areas outlined there are all covered: we pray for the Universal Church, our Nation and those in authority, the welfare of the world, the concerns of our local community, for those who suffer or are in trouble, and for those who have died. Following these prayers, we, as a corporate body, confess our sins—those things we do and the things done on our behalf that separate us from God and from God’s dream for the world. After the confession, the Priest gives an absolution, a proclamation of forgiveness on behalf of God, reminding us all that God does not wish to condemn but to lift up that which is fallen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

BCP p.385

The People may kneel, sit, or stand. Silence follows each petition. In the course of the silence after each bidding, the People offer their own prayers, either silently or aloud.

Reader I ask your prayers for God’s people throughout the world; for this gathering; for Michael, our Presiding Bishop, Andrew, Allen, and Mary, our Bishops, and Lisa and Dorothy, our priests, and for all ministers and people. Pray for the Church. *Silence.*

Reader I ask your prayers for peace; for goodwill among nations; and for the well-being of all people. Pray for justice and peace. *Silence.*

Reader I ask your prayers for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the homeless, the oppressed, those who live with physical or mental illness. Pray for those in any need or trouble. *Silence.*

Reader I ask your prayers for all who seek God, or a deeper knowledge of God. Pray that they may find and be found by God. *Silence.*

Reader I ask your prayers for the departed. Pray for those who have died. *Silence.*

Reader Praise God for those in every generation in whom Christ has been honored. Pray that we may have grace to glorify Christ in our own day.

*The Celebrant adds a concluding collect and the people respond, **Amen.***

THE CONFESSION OF SIN

BCP p.360

Celebrant Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.
Silence is observed.

All Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word and deed
by what we have done and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

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

*Now that we have been reminded of God's forgiveness and mercy, we all stand to exchange the peace of God with one another. This is not intended as a time for normal conversation or coffee hour greetings; instead, it is set apart, made holy, as a time to exchange signs with one another that we are called to offer God's mercy and peace to all those whom we encounter. Therefore, it is important to exchange the Peace with **all** those around us, especially newcomers and those we do not know, as a symbol that we are all vessels to one another of God's peace in this world.*

THE PEACE

Celebrant The Peace of Christ be always with you.
People And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

All are seated as brief announcements are shared.

LITURGY OF THE TABLE: THE HOLY COMMUNION

The gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar by people from the congregation as a sign that we take what God provides, wheat and grapes, to produce something that God will bless and make holy. We also take the money that is offered from the fruits of our labor in thanksgiving and ask God to bless them and use them to do the mission and ministry we are called to do in the church, community and beyond.

OFFERTORY SENTENCES

Celebrant Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

As the gifts are brought (Presented) to the altar, there is typically a musical offering. This may be a canticle or other piece of music offered by a soloist, or if a hymn, we stand and sing together.

DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heaven - ly host: praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Words: Thomas Ken (1637-1711)

Music: *Old 100th*, melody from *Psaumes octante trois de David*, 1551, alt.; harm. after Louis Bourgeois (1510?-1561?)

The part of our service that we're moving into now is called "the Liturgy of the Table." It is called this because we gather at God's table to break bread together and to tell the story of our creation and salvation. We break bread and pour wine and re-tell the story as if we participated in it way back then—because we are participating in it now! This is the first important piece of the Eucharist: RICH REMEMBERING also known as the Anamnesis. Part of the way we participate in rich-remembering is that we tell Jesus's story. In the prayers we'll say in a few minutes, we tell the story about Jesus and the disciples gathered around the Table and sharing the Last Supper meal. This is the second important piece of the Eucharist: the Jesus Story, the Institution Narrative. As we say our prayers of remembering we literally offer up the gifts of bread and wine to God. This is the third important piece of the Eucharist: OFFERING or OBLATION. The fourth important piece of the Eucharist is when we ask the Holy Spirit to come and sanctify, that is, set apart as holy, the bread and wine. We ask God's Spirit to make the bread and wine into the true presence of Christ, the Epiclesis, from which we are fed Jesus' Body and Blood. We are what we eat, and God wants us to be Jesus's Body in the world. We believe that when we ask the Holy Spirit to bless these gifts, that they become even more than symbols. When we ask, we believe that Jesus Christ himself is present with us, that with him come the whole company of heaven including the angels, archangels, and all of the saints in heaven, all of those who we love but see no longer. So, Jesus meets us all in this bread and this wine. The final word in this prayer is the "AMEN" at the end.

When we all say "Amen" it means that we agree to everything that has been prayed. Did you know that if no one said that big "Amen" at the end, then we couldn't continue? We then say the Lord's Prayer together and the Fraction Anthem, which is when the Body of Christ is symbolically broken open for the salvation of the world and for people to feed upon in order to receive life.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER D

BCP p.372

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

All stand.

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

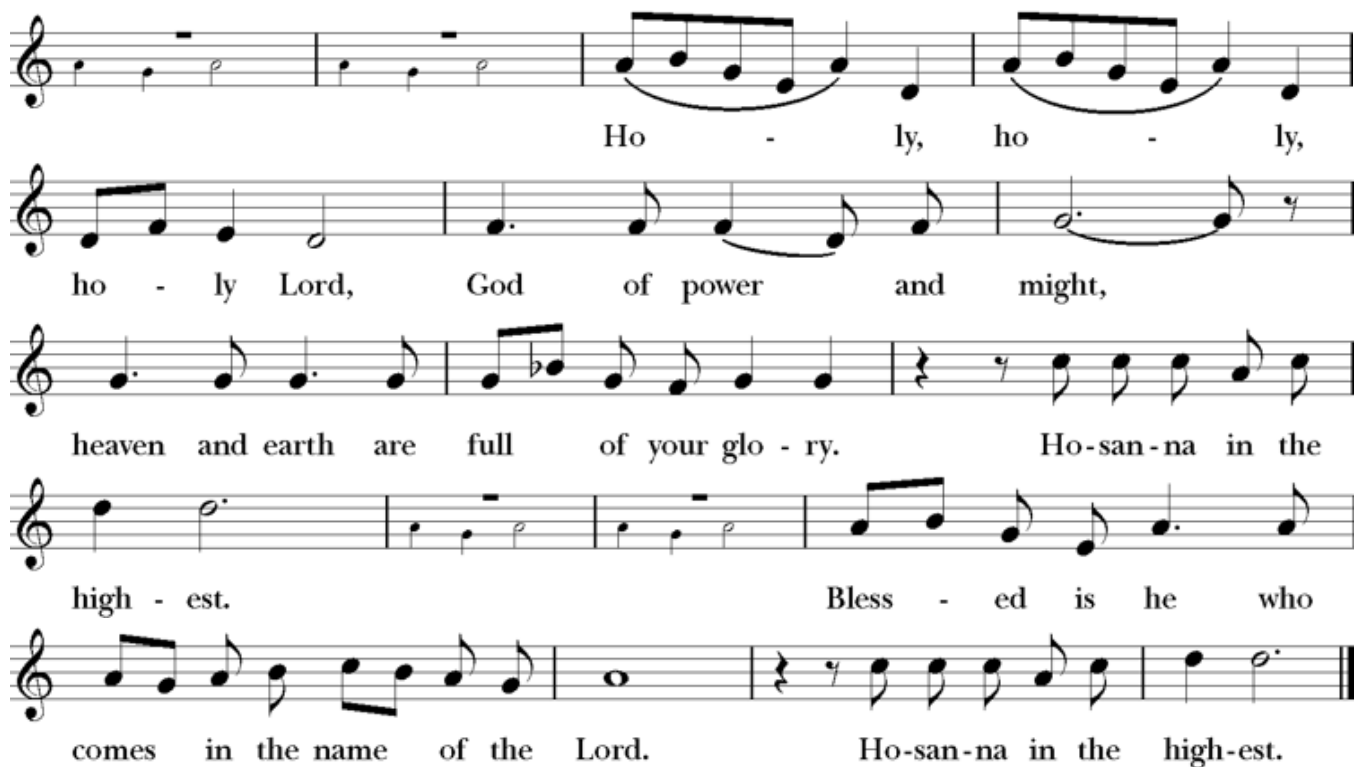
People It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Celebrant It is truly right to glorify you, Father, and to give you thanks; for you alone are God, living and true, dwelling in light inaccessible from before time and for ever.

Fountain of life and source of all goodness, you made all things and fill them with your blessing; you created them to rejoice in the splendor of your radiance.

Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day; and, beholding the glory of your presence, they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them, and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we acclaim you, and glorify your Name, as we sing:

All remain standing and sing:



Music: William Mathias (1934-1992)

The people may stand, sit, or kneel.

Celebrant

We acclaim you, holy Lord, glorious in power. Your mighty works reveal your wisdom and love. You formed us in your own image, giving the whole world into our care, so that, in obedience to you, our Creator, we might rule and serve all your creatures. When our disobedience took us far from you, you did not abandon us to the power of death. In your mercy you came to our help, so that in seeking you we might find you. Again and again you called us into covenant with you, and through the prophets you taught us to hope for salvation.

Father, you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our Savior. Incarnate by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, he lived as one of us, yet without sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners, freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. To fulfill your purpose he gave himself up to death; and, rising from the grave, destroyed death, and made the whole creation new.

And, that we might live no longer for ourselves, but for him who died and rose for us, he sent the Holy Spirit, his own first gift for those who believe, to complete his work in the world, and to bring to fulfillment the sanctification of all.

When the hour had come for him to be glorified by you, his heavenly Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end; at supper with them he 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.”

Father, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption. Recalling Christ’s death and his descent among the dead, proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand, awaiting his coming in glory; and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us, this bread and this cup, we praise you and we bless you.

All
We praise you, we bless you,
we give thanks to you,
and we pray to you, Lord our God.

Celebrant Lord, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us, and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ.

Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ, to the praise of your Name.

Remember, Lord, your one holy catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of your Christ. Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace.

And grant that we may find our inheritance with the Blessed Virgin Mary, with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, with blessed John and all the saints who have found favor with you in ages past. We praise you in union with them and give you glory through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and for ever..

All
AMEN.

Celebrant And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,
All **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,**
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated bread. A period of silence is observed.

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

FRACTION ANTHEM

THE INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION: ALL ARE WELCOME

The Celebrant invites the people to receive Holy Communion.

Celebrant The Gifts of God for the people of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

All are invited to receive Communion. If you do not wish to receive Communion, you also are invited to come forward to receive a blessing. The ushers will guide you forward to the Communion station below the lectern. If you wish to receive a blessing, cross your arms over your chest to signal to the priest that you wish to receive a blessing. To receive Communion: hold your hands palms facing upward and the priest will place the bread (host) in your palm. Please tell the priest if you want a gluten free host. The host is then consumed.

THE POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

The people stand, sit, or kneel.

Celebrant Let us pray.

All Almighty and everliving God,
we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food
of the most precious Body and Blood
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries
that we are living members of the Body of your Son,
and heirs of your eternal kingdom.
And now, Father, send us out
to do the work you have given us to do,
to love and serve you
as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

THE BLESSING

The Priest blesses the people, and the people respond, Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

DISMISSAL

Celebrant Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

St. John's Episcopal Church

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Ministers
Rector
Priest Associate
Bookkeeper
Buildings and Grounds Supervisor
Director of Children and Youth Ministries
Director of Communications
Director of Music
Director of the Nursery School
Parish Administrator

All members of the Congregation
The Rev. Lisa P. Mason
The Rev. Dorothy A. Greene
Ms. Lisa Sommer
Mr. Francisco Vargas
Ms. Holly Dean Hirshenson
Ms. Chris Marmora Palmer
Dr. Paul-Martin Maki
Ms. Catherine Bucci
Ms. Laura Rawlings

