



The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple

The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

February 2, 2025

Collect of the Day

Almighty and everliving God, we humbly pray that, as your only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple, so we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts by Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The First Lesson

Malachi 3:1-4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like washers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord, as in the days of old and as in former years.

The Psalm

Psalm 84

How lovely is your dwelling place,
O Lord of hosts!

**My soul longs, indeed it faints,
for the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh sing for joy
to the living God.**

Even the sparrow finds a home
and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may lay her young,
at your altars, O Lord of hosts,
my King and my God.

**Happy are those who live in your house,
ever singing your praise. Selah**

Happy are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion. [a]

**As they go through the valley of Baca,
they make it a place of springs;
the early rain also covers it with pools.**

They go from strength to strength;
the God of gods will be seen in Zion.

**O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer;
give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah**

Behold our shield, O God;
look on the face of your anointed.

**For a day in your courts is better
than a thousand elsewhere.**

**I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than live in the tents of wickedness.**

For the Lord God is a sun and shield;
he bestows favor and honor.

No good thing does the Lord withhold
from those who walk uprightly.

**O Lord of hosts,
happy is everyone who trusts in you.**

The Second Lesson

Hebrews 2:14-18

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

The Gospel Lesson

Luke 2:22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word,

for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”

And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul, too.” There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him.

Next week’s readings

Our readings are from the Revised Common Lectionary, Year C, and we are using the NRSVUE translations. The readings for next week are:

Isaiah 6:1-13

Psalm 138

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Luke 5:1-11

Numbers last week

8.00 am 18

10.00 am 89

Important Upcoming Events

Sunday, February 2

- Celebration of the Feast of Absalom Jones- 3 pm, at Trinity and St. Philip's Cathedral.

Thursday, February 6

- Care of the Immigrant and Refugee Among Us forum - online, 7:30 pm-8:30 pm

Sunday, February 9

- Annual Meeting - one service at 10 am

Sunday, February 23

- Forums on Planned Giving, after 8.00 am and 10.00 am services

Annual Parish Meeting – Sunday, February 9, following the 10am service.

Together, we'll reflect on the past year, review our church's financial health, hear ministry updates, prepare for our sabbatical time, and elect new Vestry members. This is a valuable time to celebrate our community and look forward to the coming year.

There is only **ONE SERVICE on this Sunday, at 10am**. It is our annual Jazz Eucharist, featuring Richard Berggren and his band.

Care of the Immigrant and Refugee Among Us Forum

Currently, legal policies and enforcement changes are occurring that dramatically alter the lived experiences of immigrants and refugees in the United States. In this time of increasing xenophobia, how do we as followers of Jesus respond in love to care for our neighbor and protect

the vulnerable among us? What are ways we can respond right now and looking to the future?

Our presenter Diane Sammons, Chancellor of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark, will offer insights into our Christian commitment to care for the immigrant, an overview of the current legal realities facing immigrants and refugees, and provide opportunities/suggestions for individuals and congregations as they seek to engage this work. As part of the forum, The Rev. Miguel Hernandez, Priest-in-Charge of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in West Orange will share stories of the impact these policies are having in our diocese.

When: Thursday, Feb. 6 from 7:30pm-8:30pm
Where: Online (Zoom link will be emailed upon registering)



To register, please use the QR code.

Monthly Food Pantry Collection

In the month of February, we are directing our collection to the food pantry at Holy Trinity, West Orange. They have requested donations of **hearty soups and stews**. We always welcome other regular sized, non-perishable donations, too. Drop off donations in the Narthex food barrel or in the storage container in the vestibule off the parking lot. Your donations make a great deal of difference to our hungry neighbors. Questions: contact mchugh.lindsay@gmail.com.

Celebration of the Feast of Absalom Jones

The Union of Black Episcopalians Diocese of Newark Chapter invites you to celebrate the life and ministry of the Rev. Absalom Jones, the first person of African descent ordained a deacon and priest in the Episcopal Church, in an in-person and online service. The celebrant will be The Rt. Rev. Carlye J. Hughes, 11th Bishop of Newark.

The service will be at 3pm, in-person at Trinity and St. Philip's Cathedral (608 Broad Street, Newark, NJ 07102) and live streamed to the diocesan YouTube channel, [youtube.com/c/dionewark](https://www.youtube.com/c/dionewark). A reception will follow at the Cathedral Offices at 589 Broad Street (directly across the street from the Cathedral).

Planned Giving Forum

Are you interested in finding out more about how you can remember St. George's in your estate plan? On Sunday, February 23, following the 8.00 am and 10.00 am services, we will be offering a forum on planned giving.

Altar Flower Tributes - Say it with flowers!

You may not be aware of it, but there has been a long-standing tradition at St. George's to dedicate the floral decorations at each Sunday service in memory of or thanksgiving for people we care about. Alas, we've let it slide in the last years, but the Altar Guild is going to revive this charming custom.

The annual fundraising events for Advent/Christmas and Easter, well-known to most St. Georgians, are focused on small gifts to underwrite the large-scale decoration of the sanctuary for these high holidays.

However, EVERY Sunday is a potential flower memorial for someone you love. The Altar Guild normally spends about \$50 each weekend on flowers, with the exceptions of Advent and Lent, when flowers are not used.

If there is something YOU would like to commemorate—a birthday, a wedding or anniversary—or a loved one you would like to name with thanks or in loving memory, the Altar Guild would welcome your

donation for the altar flowers for that Sunday. We will publish your commemoration in the Sunday bulletin.

Although there is technically no limit to the number of names we can celebrate on any given Sunday, the donation will be the same for everyone—and the extra funds will be used for any unclaimed weekend.



Schedule your flower memorial by scanning the QR code. Payments can be made online, details are included on the signup form.

Coffee Hour: important: Kitchen construction is ongoing!

NOTE: The anteroom and nursery will be used for staging and storage. For everyone's safety, it is VERY IMPORTANT that children do not play in the smaller room. We thank you for your cooperation, as we await our new kitchen! During kitchen construction (approximately mid-February) coffee hour will continue to be held in the parish hall with the following schedule:

Week 1: Birthday Cake and fruit

Week 2: Loaves & Fishes Coffee Hour (coffee/tea, and whatever parishioners bring to share!)

Week 3: Ministry Coffee Hour

Week 4: Family Hosted Coffee Hour

Week 5: Loaves & Fishes

As construction continues, (stay tuned for exact reopening and PARTY!), coffee hour should be simple: no cutlery, no plates (can fit on a napkin), juice, tea, coffee. Suggestions are simple baked goods and fruit.

Stay Connected with St. George's!

Are you new to the parish? Are you excited to learn about the amazing ministries and activities happening at St. George's? Be sure to sign up for our weekly online newsletter so you don't miss out! To sign up, please email our Parish Administrator, Ruth Deane, at parish-office@stgeorges-maplewood.org.

Stay Connected with the Diocese of Newark!

As a part of the Diocese of Newark, St. George's contributes to and participates in the larger mission of our diocese— *Join us in following Jesus Christ with bold acts of justice, peace, and love.* Sign up to receive The VOICE Online (our diocesan digital newsletter) and check out the amazing things going on in our Diocese!



In Our Prayers this week

Rich; Richard & Bea Berggren; Clarence Clarke & Andrezj; Marlene Eubanks; Marianne Dwyer; James & Mary Ip; Suzanne & Rev. Bob Morris; Mandy Robinson; Rita Paolillo; Andrea; Annette; Elizabeth Allen; Tilly-Jo Emerson; Shaunille McDonald; Robert Oliphant & spouse Kathy Jo Blaske; AJ Hoffs-McCauley; Lauren; Chris Tietjen; Jo Hoffs; Brenda Gayden; Anna Mendez; Arlo; Sue; Annette Cammarata; the soul of Rosa & her family; Meredith Borelli; the soul of Teesha, & her family Brian, Jonah & River Hack; the soul of Lester Mitchell & his family; the soul of Regina Lata Singh & her family; the soul of Kaaren Patterson & for her family; the Hessaman family; the soul of Martha Kitali & her family; Dan Mitchell; Tony Persichetti & his family; Tanya Harper; Sarah Harms; the soul of Nissa Whittle's father & for the family; Anne & for Bonnie, her siblings & her family; Jane Ungaro; the soul of Carole Carlin & her family; Carolyn & her family; Hugo & his family; Edith; Craig Henderson and his family; for the soul of Glenn Douglass Jubilee, for Jane Jubilee & his family; Jane Ungaro; Mary & Doug Franklin; for the souls of Tony Persichetti and his son, Anthony Persichetti & for their family; Trevor Wilson; the soul of Laurie Pierson and her family; Lenny Paolillo.

If you wish to request special prayers, please email your request to st-georges-healing@googlegroups.com. Include the name or names (preferably both first & last) and what we should be praying for. NOTE: After one month names are routinely removed from the list unless we receive a request to continue the prayer.