



ST. THOMAS

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Second Sunday of Advent
December 10, 2023 10:30 AM

The Holy Eucharist Rite Two

It is the custom in the Episcopal Church to present ourselves to our Lord in silence before the service begins. Please silence your cell phones.

Prelude

Nun komm der Heiden Heiland

Johann Pachelbel

The Lighting of the second Advent candle

the second purple candle is lit by a family member

The Falco Family

Reader: We light the second candle of Advent, the Bethlehem Candle.
We light candles to remind us that Jesus is the Light of the world.
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

People: Thanks be to God.

Celebrant: Our God and Father, we thank you for this Advent Season that helps us prepare for the celebration of the coming of the Messiah, your Son and our Lord, at Christmas. Thank you for sending Jesus to save us from our sins. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Hymn in Procession

O come, O come Emmanuel vss 3-4

Hymn 56

Opening Acclamation

BCP 355

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

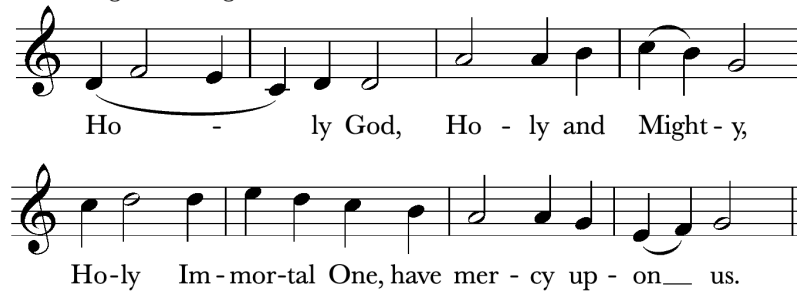
People **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

The celebrant says

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. **Amen.**

Trisagion S-360

The trisagion is sung three times.



The Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

The First Reading

Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her

that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,

that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;

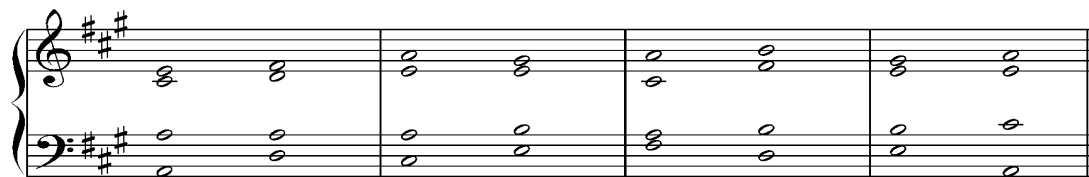
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out!"
 And I said, "What shall I cry?"
 All people are grass,
 their constancy is like the flower of the field.
 The grass withers, the flower fades,
 when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
 surely the people are grass.
 The grass withers, the flower fades;
 but the word of our God will stand for ever.
 Get you up to a high mountain,
 O Zion, herald of good tidings;
 lift up your voice with strength,
 O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
 lift it up, do not fear;
 say to the cities of Judah,
 "Here is your God!"
 See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
 and his arm rules for him;
 his reward is with him,
 and his recompense before him.
 He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
 he will gather the lambs in his arms,
 and carry them in his bosom,
 and gently lead the mother sheep.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**



Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

- 1 You have been gracious to your land, O `LORD, *
 you have restored the good fortune of `Jacob.
- 2 You have forgiven the iniquity of your `people *
 and blotted out all their `sins.

- 8 I will listen to what the LORD God is `saying, *
for he is speaking peace to his faithful people
and to those who turn their `hearts to him.
- 9 Truly, his salvation is very near to those who `fear him, *
that his glory may dwell in our `land.
- 10 Mercy and truth have met to `gether; *
righteousness and peace have `kissed each other.
- 11 Truth shall spring up from the `earth, *
and righteousness shall look down from `heaven.
- 12 The LORD will indeed grant pros`perity, *
and our land will yield its `increase.
- 13 Righteousness shall go be`fore him, *
and peace shall be a pathway for his `feet.

The Second Reading

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Sequence Hymn

There's a voice in the wilderness crying

Hymn 75

The Gospel

Mark 1:1-8

Deacon The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’”

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Deacon The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Children’s Moment

*Children may come forward to the step in front of the altar as we sing the refrain & verse 1 of
“All Things Bright and Beautiful,” Hymn 405.*

The Sermon

The Rev. Ranie Neislar

The Nicene Creed

BCP 358

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.

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

God of love, we pray for your church: For Michael, our Presiding Bishop; Glenda, our Bishop; Brian, our Assisting Bishop, for Donavan, Ranie, and Jeannie, our clergy, for all Bishops, priests and deacons; and for all who seek you in the community of the faithful. Equip us with compassion and love, to carry out your work of reconciliation in the world.

Add your prayers, silently or aloud.

God of love,
Hear our prayers.

God of freedom, we pray for our nation, and for all the nations of the world: For peace and unity across all barriers, and for elected and appointed leaders, that they would serve the common good. Unite the human family in bonds of love.

Add your prayers, silently or aloud.

God of freedom,
Hear our prayers for the world.

God of justice, we pray for the earth, your creation entrusted to our care: For the animals and birds, the mountains and oceans, and all parts of your creation that have no voice of their own. Stir up in us a desire to protect the earth and all its resources, that we may leave to our children's children the legacy of beauty and abundance that you have given us.

Add your prayers, silently or aloud.

God of justice,
Hear our prayers for the earth.

God of peace, we pray for the churches and communities of our diocese: For our local leaders; for our schools and workplaces; for our neighborhoods and homes. Kindle in every heart a desire for equality, respect, and opportunity for all. Give us courage to strive for justice and peace among all people.

And we pray for our Companion Diocese of Honduras, for Bishop Allen, and for our Colonia Episcopal Students: Yosli, Joseline, Oscar, Andrea, Escarleth, Jeimy, Anthony, Wilson, Josselin, Eric, Ana, Seylin, Kenzie, Genesis, Grodvan, Derek, and Sarai.

Add your prayers, silently or aloud.

God of peace,
Hear our prayers for our communities.

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as Christ loves us.

We give thanks for the birthdays of Thad Mauldin, Ruth Erwin, Luke Rock, Jemalee Adams, Larry Hill, Ronald Evans, Nichole Hargrove, Scarlet Champion, Jim Johnson, Brenda Smith, Linda Soule, and Becky Stokes.

Add your prayers, silently or aloud.

God of blessing,
Hear our prayers for our friends and families.

God of mercy, we pray for all in any kind of need or trouble. For refugees and prisoners; for the sick and suffering, the lonely and despairing; and for those facing violence. Awaken in us compassion and humility of spirit, as we seek and serve Christ in all persons.

We pray especially for Graham Arnold, Cindy & Tom Atkins, Eric Cantrell, Belinda Greenaway, Sharon Griffin, Larry Hill, Diane Hutson, Ann Knowles, Pam Lloyd, Janet McAlister, Julia & Jack Mayo, Larry Meyer, Linda Mixon, Lipmon Moy, Matthew Neustadter, Norma Oberlies, Will Patterson, Karley Mauldin Renna, Dan Seaman, Connie Sharp, Quinn Hattaway Short, Al Stokes, Kay Strobel, Tim Talley, Ursula Vann, Susan Waddle, Annie Wells, Lee West, Jane Williams, and for those who we name now, either silently or aloud.

Add your prayers, silently or aloud.

God of mercy,
Hear our prayers for all who are in need.

God of grace, we pray for those who have died: For the faithful in every generation; for prophets and for martyrs; and for all the communion of saints. Make us faithful to your call to proclaim your

Good News, by word and example, and bring us at last into the glorious company of the saints in light.

Add your prayers, silently or aloud.

God of grace,

Hear our prayers for those who have died.

The Celebrant concludes with a Collect.

The Confession of Sin

BCP 360

**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.**

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Welcome and Announcements

THE LITURGY OF THE TABLE

Offertory Anthem

Zion, at thy Shining Gates

George Guest

Please stand

Presentation Hymn

vs 3 of Hymn 380

The Great Thanksgiving Eucharistic Prayer A

BCP 361



It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your name:

The people stand or kneel, as the Celebrant continues.

Sanctus

Hymn S-130

**Holy, holy, holy Lord. God of power and might,
Holy, holy, holy Lord. God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ 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."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom. All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**



And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

The Lord's Prayer

BCP 364

**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 Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

Fraction Anthem

Hymn S-155

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive communion in The Episcopal Church. If you do not wish to receive, you are welcome to receive a blessing. Come to the altar, cross your arms over your chest, and the clergy will provide a blessing. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

Communion Hymn

O heavenly word, eternal light

Hymn 63

Postcommunion Prayer

BCP 366

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

Hymn in Procession

Comfort, comfort ye my people

Hymn 67

The Dismissal

Postlude

Improvisation on *Greenland*

Haydn/Jacob

Worship Team for December 10, 2023

Celebrant	The Rev. Donovan Cain
Preacher	The Rev. Ranie Neislar
Deacon	The Rev. Jeannie Randall
Organist	Sam Wright
Choir Director	Kathy Heim
Eucharistic Minister	Jane Allgood
Acolytes	Abby Randall, Archer Morrison, Addison Marr, Dean Falco
Lectors	Ann Marie Batista and Kurt Dietz
Ushers	Ted and Kelly Evans
Greeters	Patty Moy and Margie Harris
Vestry on Duty	Linda Lou Hardison and Grace Casey
Flower Guild	Susy Thurber
Altar Guild	Gretchen Mauldin, Brenda Smith, Cary McIntyre
Breakfast	9:30 Bible Study
Refreshments	Maggie and Guild Powell, Robbie Clark



Use this venmo QR code to make direct donations to St. Thomas.

This QR code is just for newcomers!



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OUR PRAYERS FOR DECEMBER 10, 2023

We pray for the ill or distressed: **Dean, Brian, Robert Lee, Brook** (D. Baker's father, brother, friends); **Kathy, James, Sylvia** (S. Barnett's relative & friends); **Angie** (P. Bedenbaugh's friend); **Pam** (B. Beebe's sister); **Matt** (A. Cain's father); **Larry** (Fr. D's uncle); **Glen Yates** (S. Carrier's friend); **Glenda, Thomas** (K. Carter's mother & brother); **Maria** (A. Clark's relative); **Mary, Mark** (D. Clark's niece, friend); **Martha** (K. Clayton's aunt); **Randy** (T. Clements' brother-in-law); **Laura, Ralph** (Conovers' friends); **Brad** (C. Covell's brother); **Rob** (Covell's friend); **Mark** (G. Dinstuhl's son); **Fred** (B. Dodson's relative); **Lois-Anne, Al** (C. Doyle's friends); **Cindy** (D. Eppling's daughter); **Tanya** (J. Eskew's sister-in-law); **Cecelia** (K. Evan's sister & S. Kittle's daughter); **Paul, Jennifer** (K. Evans' cousin & friend); **Roger** (T. Evans friend); **Jan** (M. Evans' friend); **Marcella** (L. Fowler's mother); **Rhonda, Helen** (The Geis' friends); **Martha** (O. Gibson's relative); **Thomas** (B. Greenaway's son); **Will, Tim, Jane, Kathy** (G. Griffith's grandson, friends); **Libby** (M. Harris' friend); **Patrick, Destiny** (D. Hattaway's friends); **Stark, Spencer, Krystin, Rolly** (K. Heim's friends); **Buddy, Kelsey** (P. Heim's friends); **Danny** (The Johnsons' nephew); **Ann** (E. Jones' friend); **Lois, Holland** (J. Jurhs' friend & daughter); **Dan, Frank** (S. Kittle's friend & relative); **Judy** (C. Knickelbein's aunt); **Paul** (L. Kreider's father); **Jimmy** (M.&T. Lackey's friend); **Jerry, Dennis** (T. Lee's father, brother); **Frances** (P. Lloyd, N. Oberlies friend); **Sandra, Amy** (K. MacLeod's relatives); **Dan** (D. McCauley's brother); **Jesse** (C. McGill's son); **Rusty** (M. Marr's friend); **Jorge, Ron, Tamy** (Mauldins' friends); **Cassie, Beth** (friends of J. Mayo); **Gail** (B. J. Merchant's friend); **Joseph** (Meyers' friend); **Bambi, Pat** (S. Mohler's parents); **Daisy** (W. Moore's mother); **Bennie,**

Allison (Moys' friend and daughter); **Paul** (P. Nielsen's son); **Hadley, Doug** (T. Perry's friends); **John** (L. Potter's friend); **Terry** (D. Palumbo's mother), **David** (B. Rackley's son); **Theresa** (R. Ross' friend); **Eric** (C. Roy's nephew); **Janet** (L. Ryder's friend); **Nancy, Lorri** (C. Seaman's sister, sister-in-law); **Alan; Mack; Kimberly, Maddie** (S. Smith's son; family; friends); **Linda** (friend of B. Smith); **Pam** (friend of B. Stilson); **Eric, Zach** (J. Stokes' friend); **Kay** (C. Sutton's mother); **Dorothy** (G. Taylor's friend); **Sharon, Valerie** (N. Teasdale's friends); **Gina** (L. Thurber's friend); **Rachel, Will, Lily, Eli** (R. Verschoore's friends); **Erin** (friend of S. Waddle); **Lynn** (E. Wilson's friend).

We pray for those who serve in and with the United States Armed Forces, especially: **Benjamin** (L. Cooper's son, L. Anders' grandson); **Logan Dodson** (Dodsons' grandson); **Kathryn & Juan Muñera** (M. Erker's daughter, son-in-law); **Zach Young** (N. Fisher's son-in-law); **Nick Moultrie, Parker Byrd, Chris Garcia** (J. Fletcher's friends); **Christopher Harris** (M. Harris' son); **Grover Lee Wilson, Teddy Lovejoy, Zane Goodnite** (S. Kittle's relatives); **Drexel Martin** (C. Knickelbein's cousin); **Patrick Macala** (R. Macala & K. Clayton's son); **Jackson Mayo** (Mayos' grandson); **Julia Flores** (D. McCauley's cousin); **Ben Meyer** (B. & L. Meyer's grandson); **Luke, J. R.** (K. Strobel's friends) and **Daniel** (L. Thames' son).

St. Thomas Episcopal Church Contact Information
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The Week at-a-Glance

Sunday, December 10	
8:00 AM	Holy Eucharist, Nave
9:00 AM	Breakfast with the 9:30 Wednesday Bible Study, Parish Hall
9:30 AM	Adult Christian Formation with Father Donavan, Parish Hall
	Adult Christian Formation with Mother Ranie, Conference Room 1
9:30 AM	Children's St. Thomas Night Christmas pageant practice, Parlor
9:30 AM	Youth Christian Formation, Youth Room Hudson Hall
9:45 AM	Children's Christian Formation, Hiers Hall
10:30 AM	Holy Eucharist, Nave
5:00 PM	"Come As You Are" Holy Eucharist, Nave, Parish Hall
Monday, December 11	
10:00 AM	St. Thomas Book Club, Parlor
6:00 PM	Film Screening, <i>The Philadelphia Eleven</i> , The Church of the Nativity
7:00 PM	ESAU Society, Parish Hall
Tuesday, December 12	
6:00 PM	Bible Study with Mtr. Ranie, Conference Room 2 Hudson Hall
Wednesday, December 13	
9:30 AM	Bible Study, Conference Room 1
11:00 AM	Bible Study, Conference Room 1
4:30 PM	Treble Choir, Choir Room Hudson Hall
6:00 PM	Festival of Lessons and Carols, Nave with Reception, Parish Hall
Thursday, December 14	
4:00 PM	Centering Prayer, St. Anne's Chapel Hiers Hall
Friday, December 8	
12:10 PM	Pray the Rosary for Advent with Father Donavan, Nave

Have you turned in your 2024 pledge card yet? It is definitely not too late to show your love and support for St. Thomas. We have big, exciting plans for growth in 2024 but we can't do it without you! Please consider turning in your pledge card before December 31st. **EVERY PLEDGE COUNTS.**

Christmas flowers are a wonderful way to remember your loved ones. The Christmas offertory envelopes are in the pews to use for your memorials or thanksgivings. Fill it out and place in the offering plate or bring to the office no later than **Monday, December 18.** We ask for a minimum donation of \$30 to cover the costs of the Christmas flowers.

Join us today for adult Christian Formation at 9:30 AM. Father Donavan continues his class, *Angels in Christian Scripture & Tradition* and Mother Ranie continues her class, Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

Join Miss Kathy and Ms. Laura Beth today in the Parlor from 9:30 to 9:45 AM for St. Thomas night practice. After practice, children's Christian formation will have an abbreviated class at 9:45 AM in Hiers Hall.

St. Thomas Book Club meets **Monday, December 11th** at 10:00 AM in the Parlor and will discuss *All the Light We Cannot See*. Call Elouisa Stokes with any questions.

A film screening, The Philadelphia Eleven, will be Monday, **December 11th** at 7:00 PM at The Church of the Nativity. The film tells of the first women ordained as priests in the Episcopal Church in 1974 before General Convention affirmed and explicitly authorized the ordination of women to the priesthood.

Join us in the Nave for A Festival of Lessons and Carols on Wednesday, December 13th at 6:00 PM presented by St. Thomas choirs. A reception to follow in the Parish Hall.

Pray the Rosary with Father Donavan on Fridays in Advent. Meet at 12:10 PM in the Nave. Rosaries are provided.

Vestry Nominations are now open. We are preparing to elect four new members at the Annual Parish Meeting in January. Look for the box in the Narthex marked VESTRY.

Upcoming Events

St. Thomas Night will **Sunday, December 17th** at 5:00 PM.

Advent Program continues with **Carols, Cocoa, and Cookies** on **Wednesday, December 20th** at 6:00 PM.