

Saint Luke the Evangelist

PLAISTOW, NH



CHRISTMAS

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“A social movement that only moves people is merely a revolt. A movement that changes both people and institutions is a revolution.” - Martin Luther King, Jr.

We do not immediately think of the Christmas event as the start of a revolution. But that in truth was what it began. Typical of God's ways, it began in a small way: the birth of a baby boy. Like the mustard seed that boy would later use to illustrate the Kingdom of God, its smallness even embraced its geography. Bethlehem was but a tiny dot on the map. But from there the revolution sprang. The “powers that be” at the time had no idea of it because of its smallness. But it was coming for sure, in the stillness of a silent night and from an unexpected source.



The storied Hebrew nation took up little more than a fingerprint on the map of the known world. Add to that its composition of a motley group of twelve tribes bound together by what was then an atypical religion, in that it worshiped only one God. Beyond that was a maze of strange customs mandated by their strict laws.

Jewish culture stood strong on tribal and family loyalty, with lofty moral demands in sharp contrast to those of its neighbors. This inevitably led them to suffer ridicule and disdain that ultimately led to their enslavement. True, their record featured uneven loyalty to their God. Their slavery precluded an interest in building fine cities. But after their release from slavery, they did manage to build a magnificent Temple for worship in their beloved capital city of Jerusalem.

Meanwhile, there existed great nations likely to entice God to choose them as the birthplace of His Son. There was Egypt, the Jews' nemesis. Replete with gods and goddesses, their statues and temples were everywhere. Massive pyramids that cast long shadows on the desert sands stood as tombs for their dead leaders. Their culture was pure paganism, but it included great libraries and consequent learning.

Across the Mediterranean Sea were the two other great empires of Greece and Rome which took turns at outshining the Jews with cultural components like philosophers of renown and dominating armies. They built breathtaking structures still visited by present day tourists. Yet Jesus did not spring from any of those three possibilities.

For all this accomplishment, that ancient world was lacking something. The Jews understood this best of all, and had the perception that hope was a necessary ingredient for healthy human experience. They personified this hope in a Messiah who would arrive and make “crooked ways straight.” A military mastermind who would lead them to freedom from Rome and make them the greatest of all nations. But they never imagined how that Person would actually turn out to be, much less arrive. They forgot that God's ways often mismatch our own.

And so, at the right moment, arrive He did. In what our bibles tell us was “the fullness of time,” on a chilly night, in a stable cave. He was the Child of an unimaginably beautiful young Mother named Mary and a handsome young foster father named Joseph. The holy pair only partially understood what we can truthfully say now: “For the first time in history, one had to look down to see Heaven, for Heaven lay in a manger.”

Neither Caesar in his splendid marble palace, nor Herod in his fortified castle, much less Pharaoh, cruising the Nile on his gilded barge, had any idea that the world was about to roll another way. A revolution had indeed come. When the boy Jesus matured, He taught new and liberating truths. He tantalized the powerholders until they were driven to kill Him. Yet He rose glorious from the dead and we believe He is very much alive and with us now.

When all is said and done, Christmas retains its most revolutionary aspect. Considering our weak and vacillating nature, God still chooses to love us, personally and by name! He wants you and me to be part of His story. That all He really wants to do is to hug us into Heaven.

Have a blessed Christmas, everyone! Father Leonard N. Peterson

CHRISTMAS MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY

4:00 PM – Holy Angels, Plaistow

Gathering:

O Come All Ye Faithful BB 102

Psalm Response:

All the ends of the earth have seen the power of God. (2x)

Preparation of the Gifts:

O Little Town Of Bethlehem BB 88

Mass Responses: Storrington Mass

Communion:

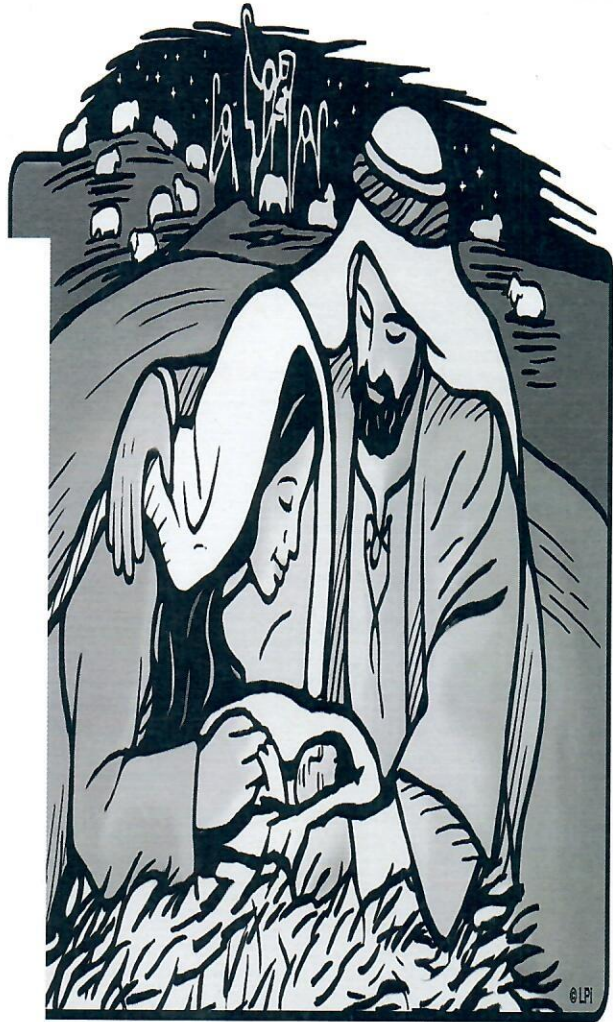
Silent Night BB 84

Hark, The Herald Angels Sing BB 105

Angels We Have Heard On High BB 109

Recessional:

Joy To The World BB 90



6:30 PM – Mary, Mother of the Church, Newton

Gathering:

O Come All Ye Faithful BB 102

Psalm Response:

All the ends of the earth have seen the power of God. (2x)

Preparation of the Gifts:

O Little Town Of Bethlehem BB 88

Mass Responses: Storrington Mass

Communion:

Silent Night BB 84

Hark, The Herald Angels Sing BB 105

Angels We Have Heard On High BB 109

Recessional:

Joy To The World BB 90

9:00 AM – Mary, Mother of the Church, Newton

Gathering:

O Come, All Ye Faithful BB 102

Psalm Response:

All the ends of the earth have seen the power of God. (2x)

Preparation of the Gifts:

Hark, The Herald Angels Sing BB 105

Mass Responses:

Storrington Mass

Communion:

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O Little Town Of Bethlehem BB 88

Recessional:

Joy To The World BB 90

ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST PARISH



Out of respect, please remember to silence or turn off your cell phones during Mass. Thank you!

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

If you would like an "end of year" financial statement of your contributions to the parish for 2024, **please call Jackie** at the Parish Office at 382-8324. **Financial Statements are issued on a request only basis.**

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

In observance of the Christmas and New Year's holidays, the Parish Office will be **closed on, December 24, 25, 26 and on December 31, January 1 and 2.**

Our usual office hours are Monday through Thursday from 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM and 1:00 PM to 4:30 PM. The Parish Office is closed on Fridays.



GIVING TREES

Thanks to all who took ornaments from the Giving Tree this year. You have helped to make the Christmas season brighter for children of the community and for many people who are struggling to make ends meet. Your generosity is truly appreciated!

ADULT CONFIRMATION OR OCIA

Are you an adult who has been Baptized and received Eucharist, but has not celebrated the sacrament of Confirmation? Or are you interested in becoming a member of the Roman Catholic Church? For more information, please call Cathy Smith at 382-8324 or email: csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

ST. LUKE'S WEBSITE! <http://stlukenh.org>

CHRISTMAS SEASON LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday, December 28	3:00 PM -Sacrament of Reconciliation – Plaistow Vigil - Feast of Holy Family Blessing of families at all weekend Masses: 4:00 PM Liturgy, Plaistow
Sunday, December 29	Feast of the Holy Family Blessing of families at all weekend Masses: 8:00 AM – Newton 10:00 AM – Plaistow 6:00 PM Evening Prayer (Newton)
Tuesday, December 31	SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD (Holy Day of Obligation) OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS 4:00 PM (Plaistow)
Wednesday, January 1	SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD (Holy Day of Obligation) OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS 9:00 AM (Newton)
Thursday, January 2	8:00 AM LITURGY NO ADORATION IN NEWTON
Saturday, January 4	3:00 PM – Sacrament of Reconciliation Vigil - SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD 4:00 PM Liturgy - Plaistow
Sunday, January 5	SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD 8:00 AM in Newton 10:00 AM in Plaistow 6:00 PM Evening Prayer (Newton)
Sunday, January 10	BAPTISM OF THE LORD Regular Liturgy Schedule 6:00 PM Evening Prayer (Newton)

✠ PARISH DIRECTORY ✠

Parish Office
Parish Prayer Line
St. Vincent de Paul Society
St. Luke's Food Pantry
Preschool

382-8324
382-8324 x 314
382-8324 x 315
819-4949
382-9783

Fr. Albert Tremblay
Cathy Smith
Joyce Szczapa
Jackie Tremblay
Val Barczak
Parish Council

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jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net
mvbarczak@comcast.net
parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net



CHRIST IS BORN ! LET US GLORIFY HIM !

A warm welcome to visitors & travelers

GUIDELINES FOR THE RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

For Catholics: As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should not be conscious of grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (Canon 916). A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

For our fellow Christians: We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions that separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (JN 17:21).

Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily NOT admitted to Holy Communion. Eucharistic sharing in exceptional circumstances by other Christians requires permission according to the directives of the diocesan bishop and the provisions of canon law (canon 844 § 4). Members of the Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church are urged to respect the discipline of their own Churches. According to Roman Catholic discipline, the Code of Canon Law does not object to the reception of communion by Christians of these Churches (canon 844 § 3).

For those not receiving Holy Communion: All who are not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another.

For non-Christians: We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot admit them to Holy Communion, we ask them to offer their prayers for the peace and the unity of the human family.

CHRISTMAS

In These Twelve Days Let Us Be Glad!

Did you know that the “Twelve Days of Christmas” come *after* Christmas Day? They run from December 26 to January 6. Together with December 25, they make 13, a “baker’s dozen” of days. Here are a few ideas for a merrier Christmastime:

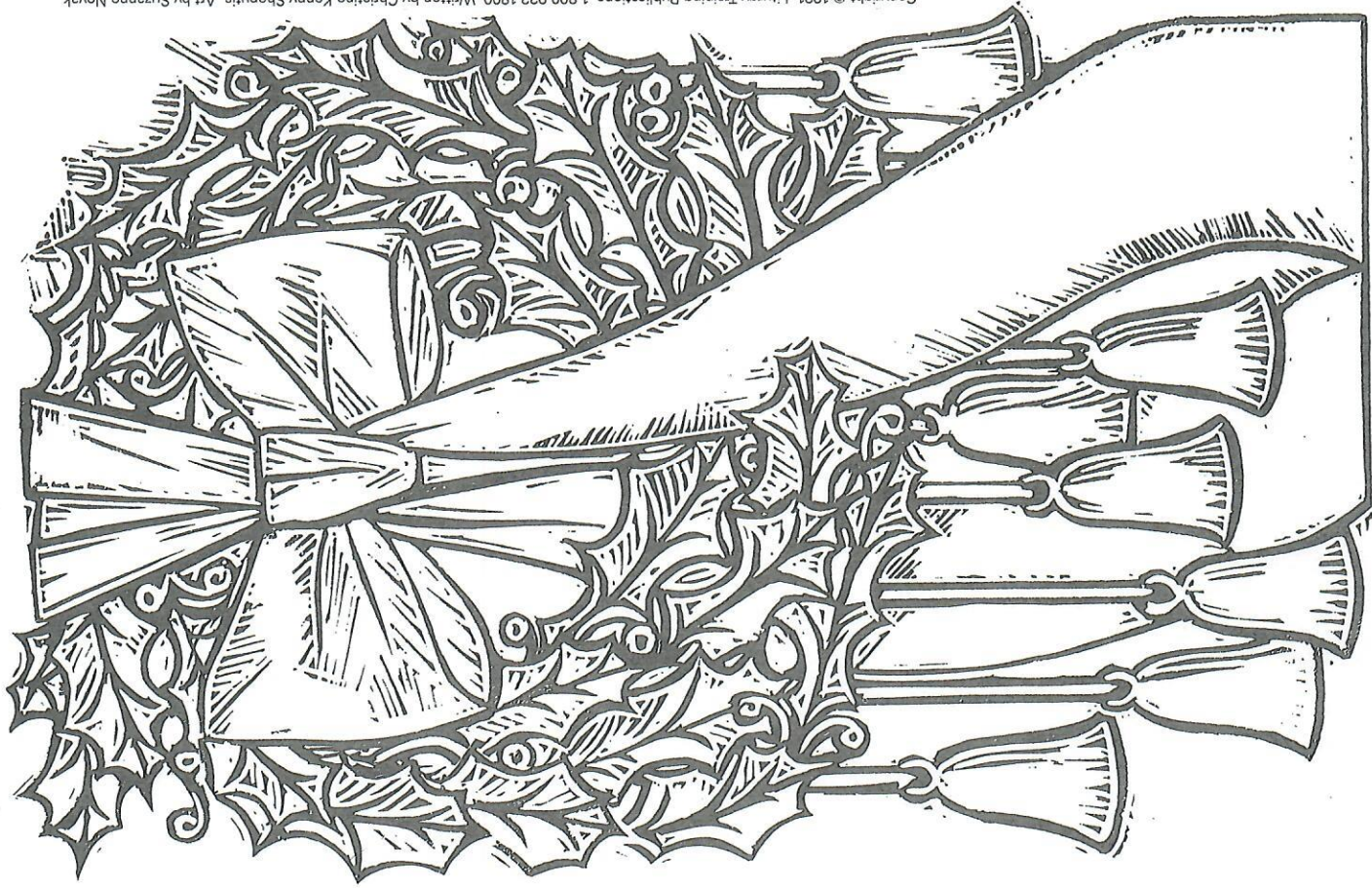
Each night from Christmas Day until Epiphany, move the statues of the Magi bit by bit closer to your nativity scene. They can travel through the house, maybe visiting each room. On Epiphany, they arrive at Bethlehem.

If there will be several gifts for each person, try spacing them out over the Twelve Days. Open one each night. That way, the surprises will keep on coming.

St. Stephen’s Day, December 26, is a perfect night to go caroling. “Good King Wenceslas” is about a saint who fed a poor man on “the feast of Stephen.” The carol is fun to sing as a round—like “Row, row, row your boat.” The day after caroling, take a gift to a food pantry.

On Holy Innocents’ Day, December 28, honor the children who died when King Herod tried to kill Jesus. This is the church’s “Children’s Day,” called *Childermas*. One family keeps their Christmas lights dark and tries not to eat any Christmas treats this day to remember all innocent people who have been killed.

On New Year’s Eve, chase away the old year by blowing horns and clanging bells. See if you can invite guests for dinner tomorrow. A guest in the home is Christ in the home. Be sure to invite Christ to keep Christmastime with you!



“O Sweet Child of Bethlehem”

by Pope Saint John XXIII (1881-1963), pope from 1958-1963.

O sweet Child of Bethlehem, grant that we may share with all our hearts in this profound mystery of Christmas.

Put into the hearts of men and women this peace for which they sometimes seek so desperately, and which You alone can give them.

Help them to know one another better, and to live as brothers and sisters, children of the same Father.

Awaken in their hearts love and gratitude for Your infinite goodness.

Join them all together in Your love. And give them Your heavenly peace,

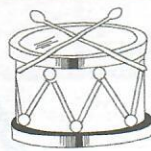
Amen.



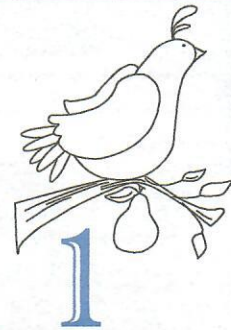
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THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

The song's gifts are hidden meanings to the teachings of faith. The "true love" mentioned in the song doesn't refer to an earthly suitor, it refers to God Himself. The "me" who receives the presents refers to every baptized person. The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In the song, Christ is symbolically presented as a mother partridge which feigns injury to decoy predators from her helpless nestlings, much in memory of the expression of Christ's sadness over the fate of Jerusalem.

1 Partridge in a Pear Tree = Jesus Christ

2 Turtle Doves = the Old and New Testaments

3 French Hens = Faith, Hope and Charity, the Theological Virtues

4 Calling Birds = the Four Gospels

5 Golden Rings = the First Five Books of the Old Testament

6 Geese A-Laying = the Six Days of Creation

7 Swans A-Swimming = the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, the Seven Sacraments

8 Maids A-Milking = the Eight Beatitudes

9 Ladies Dancing = the Nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit

10 Lords A-Leaping = the Ten Commandments

11 Pipers Piping = the Eleven Faithful Apostles

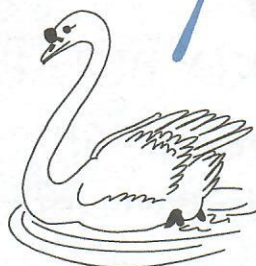
12 Drummers Drumming = the Twelve Points of Doctrine in the Apostle's Creed



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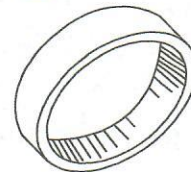
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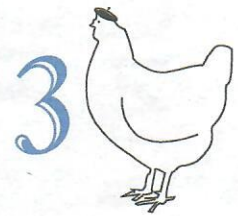
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