

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 21, 2025

8:45 & 11:00am



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS

Est. 1836 | Flat Rock, North Carolina

Mission Statement

To know and love God as He is revealed to us in Jesus Christ, to bring others to His saving love, and to serve the world in His name.

Welcome to St. John in the Wilderness

We welcome you warmly to St. John in the Wilderness and invite you to share in our songs, prayers, and eucharistic feast. If you do not have a church family at this time, then we invite you to join in this fellowship of faith as we share life together as the Body of Christ. See the note to our visitors on the back inside cover for more information about receiving Communion and joining the church.

Reminders for Worship

- Children of all ages are most welcome in worship, and during the service they may enjoy the activity bags, which are in the Tower Entrance. Nursery care is available for children from infancy to pre-K across Rutledge Drive in our Parish House Education Building from 8:30am to 12:30pm. Please use the crosswalk to get there!
- Formation is available for children, youth, and adults most Sundays from 10:10 to 10:45am in our Parish House complex across Rutledge Drive.
- Please participate in the service by singing and praying with us. At the time of the Peace, please take a few moments to leave your pew and greet others in the name of our Lord.
- A restroom is available near the front of the church and can be accessed through an exterior door. Please see an usher for directions.
- You will find hand sanitizer in the pews and with the ushers. Please use it after the Peace and before receiving Communion.

Offering Envelopes are available in the Bell Tower Entrance of the church for those who requested them for 2026.

Prayer List: Just a reminder that the Sunday prayer list will be updated at the end of the quarter. On Sunday, January 4, the list will be comprised of only the names submitted or updated in December. To add or update a name to the prayer list, visit stjohnflatrock.org/prayer-list.

O Come, Let Us Adore Him

Celebrate the Season with St. John in the Wilderness

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT | DECEMBER 21

Holy Eucharist, Rite I

8:45 and 11:00am in the Church

Formation: Greening the Graves

10:05-10:55am in the Churchyard

Join us for this special service during which we place the sprays we have made on the graves enslaved and freed people who are buried in our churchyard. Please meet at the large monument cross near Greenville Highway.

The Parish Office will be closed Wednesday, December 24 through Friday, January 2. We will open again on Monday, January 5!

CHRISTMAS EVE | WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

Festival Eucharist, Rite II

5:00 and 10:30pm in the Church

No nursery care available. Children are always welcome in worship!

Our Special Christmas Offering this year will go to support La Capilla de Santa Maria, a Latino Episcopal mission parish on the edge of Hendersonville that dates back 35 years. It is a vibrant community with many wonderful ministries and activities. All of the cash collected during our Christmas services, as well as checks and online donations with "Christmas Offering" in the memo, will be sent as a surprise Christmas gift to our dear siblings in Christ at La Capilla.

CHRISTMAS DAY | THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25

Holy Eucharist, Rite II

11:00am in the Church

No nursery care available. Children are always welcome in worship!

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS | DECEMBER 28

Holy Eucharist, Rite II

10:00am in the Church

Christmas Potluck Feast

5:00pm in the Wilderness Room



*Join us for a chance to enjoy good food and great company as we continue the spirit of the season together. Bring a dish to share if you can, but most importantly, bring yourself. There's always a seat at the table for you. **Please RSVP by scanning the QR code or at bit.ly/SJWxmaspotluck2025.***

All end-of-year giving must be received by the Parish Office no later than December 31. You may donate by placing gifts in the offering plates during services, online at www.stjohnflatrock.org/donate, or by mailing gifts to PO Box 185, Flat Rock, NC 28731. Thank you for giving so generously to God's work at St. John in the Wilderness in 2025!

TWELFTH NIGHT | MONDAY, JANUARY 5

Burning of the Greens and Other Revelry

4:00-6:00pm at Camp Kanuga

120 Camp Kanuga Circle, Hendersonville, NC 28739

Bring Christmas trees and other greens to burn! St. John will provide food and beverages as we gather around the fire to sing songs and celebrate the last night of Christmas. No RSVP necessary.

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD | TUESDAY, JANUARY 6

Epiphany Eucharist & Potluck Feast

5:30-7:30pm at the Church of the Transfiguration, Saluda

20 Episcopal Church Drive, Saluda, NC 28773



*Join us for a Eucharist and potluck celebrating the ancient feast of the Epiphany with the arrival of the Magi to venerate the Christ child, the wedding feast at Cana of Galilee, and the Baptism of our Lord. This will be a wonderful gathering of Episcopalians, Lutherans, and friends from Saluda, Tryon, Bat Cave, Hendersonville, Brevard, Mills River, Fletcher, Edneyville, and Flat Rock at the Church of the Transfiguration in Saluda. **Please register at bit.ly/deaneryepiphany2026 or by scanning the QR code.***

Holy Eucharist, Rite I

8:45 & 11:00am

PRELUDE: How bright appears the Morning Star

Dietrich Buxtehude

Welcome and Announcements

ENTRANCE HYMN: No. 56 O come, O come Emmanuel

Veni, veni Emmanuel

Verses 1-4

THE WORD OF GOD

Acclamation & Response

BCP p. 323

Celebrant Bless the Lord who forgiveth all our sins;

People **His mercy endureth for ever.**

The Celebrant says to the people

Confession of Sin, BCP p. 79

Dearly beloved, we have come together in the presence of Almighty God our heavenly Father, to set forth his praise, to hear his holy Word, and to ask, for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and our salvation. And so that we may prepare ourselves in heart and mind to worship him, let us kneel in silence, and with penitent and obedient hearts confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy.

The people stand or kneel. Silence may be kept

Minister and People

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we have sinned against thee
in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved thee with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.

**For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in thy will, and walk in thy ways,
to the glory of thy Name. Amen.**

The Bishop when present, or the Priest, stands and says

The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

All stand

KYRIE

Hymnal S-91

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Lord, have mer - cy up -

on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -

on us. Christ, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -

on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

The Celebrant says to the people

The Lord be with you.

People

And with thy spirit.

Celebrant

Let us pray.

The Collect of the Day

We beseech thee, Almighty God, to purify our consciences by thy daily visitation, that when thy Son our Lord cometh he may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson: Isaiah 7:10-16

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Psalm is read responsively by whole verse at the 8:45 service. At the 11:00 service, the congregation chants the Psalm in unison.



Chant setting, #414 from *The Hymnal 1982, Service Music*

Music: Robert Knox Kennedy (b. 1945). Copyright © 1979 Robert Knox Kennedy.

- 1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a FLOCK; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the CHERUBIM.
- 2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and MaNASSEH, *
stir up your strength and come to HELP US.
- 3 Restore us, O God of HOSTS; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be SAVED.
- 4 O Lord God of HOSTS, *
how long will you be angered despite the prayers of your PEOPLE?
- 5 You have fed them with the bread of TEARS; *
you have given them bowls of tears to DRINK.
- 6 You have made us the derision of our NEIGHBORS, *
and our enemies laugh us to SCORN.
- 7 Restore us, O God of HOSTS; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be SAVED.
- 16 Let your hand be upon the man of your RIGHT HAND, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourSELF.
- 17 And so will we never turn aWAY FROM YOU; *
give us life, that we may call upon your NAME.
- 18 Restore us, O Lord God of HOSTS; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be SAVED.
- Glory to the Father, and to the SON, *
and to the Holy GHOST:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever SHALL BE, *
world without end. aMEN.

Second Lesson: Romans 1:1-7

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

As the music begins, all stand for the gradual hymn and reorient themselves to the Gospel of our Lord as it is processed into the congregation.

GRADUAL HYMN: No. 497 How bright appears the Morning Star *Wie schoen leuchtet*

Then, all standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads the Gospel, first saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People **Glory be to thee, Lord Christ.**

The Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise be to thee, Lord Christ.**

The Sermon

The Rev. Josh Stephens

After the sermon, there is a brief moment of silence. When the Celebrant rises, the congregation stands.

The Nicene Creed

BCP p. 326

**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

Members of the youth formation class have been discussing and writing these Prayers of the People for the season of Advent during the past month. Members of the class will lead us in the Prayers during our Advent worship.

The Leaders and People pray responsively. The Leaders begin

In this season of Advent when we think about waiting and hope and peace and love, we pray to you, O God.

May there be unity of Spirit across all branches of Christianity. May we grow our faith in this time of preparation for Christ's coming. We especially pray for Bishop Sarah Mullally, the newly elected Archbishop of Canterbury, as she prepares for her role to unite the worldwide Anglican Community.

People **We trust in Christ's guidance in unifying us through God's Church.**

Lord, help all in authority to lead with a sound mind and heart. Help them to lead us to unity across all nations. Help them to strive for peace and respect for all rights.

People **Put love and truth in the hearts and actions of those who lead and follow.**

The welfare of the world is important to you and to us, O God. We pray for wars to be over, for greed to cease, and for all to value, listen to, and respect the beliefs and opinions of people and perspectives that are different from our own.

People **Help us to put this hope into action.**

Let the people in the local community who are hurting, homeless, hungry, and afraid, or were affected by Hurricane Helene, turn to God for a safe community of faith.

People **May we accept and welcome those who seek a place of refuge in our community.**

We pray for those who are sick and suffering, including Patricia, Judy, Cheryl, Patrick, Susan, Jack, Jim, Ginger, Bob, Betsy, Chuck, Cindy, Chris, Gena, Dorinda, Tawana, Carla, Jeff, Julie, Betsy, Matthew, Anne, Anthony, and Robert. Are there others?

The people may include the names of those for whom they are praying either silently or aloud.

May they find the light in the dark. May they have a quick and smooth recovery, and may we be the people they lean on to find support.

People **Let us be the hands and feet of Christ.**

Help us to commemorate those who have transitioned to eternal life, especially Brianna from North Henderson High School, as well as those who died unknown or forgotten, including the enslaved people buried in our churchyard.

People **May they find love and joy in their resurrection and may their memory linger in our hearts.**

The Celebrant offers a concluding collect.

The Peace

BCP p. 332

All stand. The Celebrant says to the people

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And with thy spirit.**

Then the Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord. The Celebrant then shares an offertory sentence.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Offertory

The ushers pass the offering plates and present the gifts of the congregation at the Lord's table. Online gifts may be made using the QR code to the right.



OFFERTORY MUSIC: 8:45 Veni, Emmanuel

Peter Pindar Stearns

11:00 People, Look East

arr. Malcolm Archer

Text: Eleanor Farjeon

People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the guest, is on the way.
Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there:
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the rose, is on the way.
Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the star, is on the way.
Angels, announce with shouts of mirth Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way.

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: Doxology

The Eighth Tune (Tallis Canon)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Him, all creatures
here be - low; Praise Him above ye heav - en - ly host; praise
Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer I, BCP p. 333

The people remain standing. The Celebrant, whether bishop or priest, faces them and says

The Lord be with you.

People **And with thy spirit.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

People **It is meet and right so to do.**

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

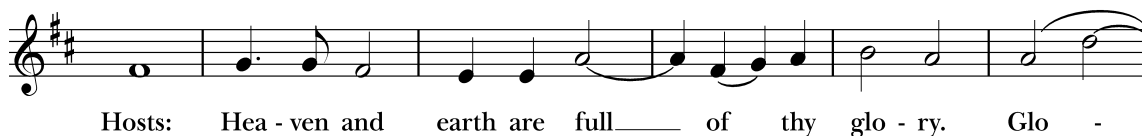
It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

Here a Proper Preface is sung or said on all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and singing,

SANCTUS

Hymnal S-114



The people stand or kneel.

Then the Celebrant continues

All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others

who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord; By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **AMEN.**

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

People and Celebrant

**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

BCP p. 337

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept.

The Celebrant continues

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!**

The following or some other suitable anthem said here

Celebrant O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,
People **have mercy upon us.**

Celebrant O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,

People **have mercy upon us.**

Celebrant O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,
People **grant us thy peace.**

The following prayer may be said. The People may join in saying this prayer

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

and may add Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The ushers immediately begin releasing the congregation to share in the Eucharistic feast. A gluten-free option is available upon request. For further instructions about Holy Communion, see the note to our visitors in the back of the bulletin.

The choir often begins by sharing a musical offering while the congregation receives the Sacrament. Following the choir's musical offering, please join in as we sing the Communion Hymn together.

COMMUNION HYMN: No. 72 Hark! the glad sound! the Savior comes *Richmond*

Sending Out of Eucharistic Visitors

Celebrant With whom will you share this communion?

Eucharistic Visitors respond with the names of those to whom they will go.

Celebrant In the name of this congregation, we send you forth bearing these holy gifts that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood.

People **We who are many are one body, because we share one bread and one cup.**

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

The people stand or kneel for the Post-Communion Prayer.

Celebrant and People

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

The Blessing

May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL HYMN: No. 56 O come, O come Emmanuel

Veni, veni Emmanuel

Verses 5-8

The Dismissal

The Deacon, or the Celebrant, may dismiss the people with these words

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: Improvisation on *Besançon*

Michael R. Barker

The Prayers of the People is that part of our liturgy which offers intercessions and thanksgivings to God. **Worshippers, wherever they are in the church, are encouraged to offer aloud or silently their own such prayers during the appropriate part of the Prayers of the People.** As we pray, please remember those who are ill or with other needs: Patricia Haire, Judy Oldenburg, Cheryl Cohen, Patrick Necessary, Susan Rex, Jack, Jim Gibbs, Ginger Quarles, Bob Sundeen, Betsy Thagard, Chuck King, Cindy Brinkmann, Chris Smith, Gena Gross, Dorinda Burnett, Tawana Gibbs, Carla Poe, Jeff, Julie Bleimann, Betsy Darnall, Matthew Kennedy, Anne Vogler, Anthony Dionisio, and Robert Odean.

The Altar Flowers are given in loving memory of Wesley Welborn Smith, *by Gail and Bill McHaffie and Megan and John Durlach.*

Eucharistic Visitors share the Body and Blood of Christ with those who receive care from our Visitor Ministry. We thank God for the ministry of Clint Adams, Stephen Askew, Patricia Tanzer Askew, Art Mack, Judy Petersen, Anita Reid, Stan Rogan, and Bill Taylor.

To Our Visitors: We welcome you with all our hearts! You are also invited to come forward at the time of Communion to receive the Sacrament or a blessing. All baptized Christians are encouraged to receive Communion, including infants and children. To receive Communion, simply come forward to kneel at the altar if you are able. Put one hand in the palm of the other and the Celebrant will share the Body of Christ with you. You may then intinct or drink from the Chalice. A gluten-free option is available upon request. If you are not baptized, please come forward and kneel at the altar while crossing your arms over your chest to receive a special blessing, and we invite you to talk to the priest at any time about entering discernment for being baptized. Won't you join with Christ and his Church on this journey of faith?

If you do not have a church home at this time, then we hope you will make St. John in the Wilderness your church family. We find that through sharing life together as the Body of Christ, we are made whole and renewed daily. Talk to an usher or member of the clergy about joining this parish, or you are welcome to simply fill out a card in your pew and put it in the offering plate. We welcome you!

THANK YOU FOR SERVING IN WORSHIP

	The Fourth Sunday of Advent December 21		Christmas Eve December 24	
	8:45am	11:00am	5:00pm	10:30pm
Lay Readers	Sandra Jeffery	Will Rodriguez	Bill Taylor	Bob Inglis
Acolytes	Jasmine Pharr	Stan Rogan Arlo Stephens Emily Ann Caldwell		Laura Teel
Ushers	George Grzenda Clint Adams	John Knapp Lisa Kauffman	George Grzenda D. Christenbury	Debby Staton Clint Adams
Greeters	Lynne Miller Judy Petersen	Carmen & Ned Curtis	Annabelle Hurd Cathryn Harrell	
Cart Drivers	Mark Owen	Nancy Cooper	John Knapp	
Videography <i>(Service)</i>	E. Wiescholek	N/A	BJ McKee	N/A
Videography <i>(Formation)</i>	N/A – Greening the Graves		N/A	
Altar Guild	Cathryn Harrell BJ McKee Jim Cooper <i>(Brass)</i>	Diane Skelton Becky Petersen	Kathy Newbold Carolyn Franz	Laurie Morris
Flower Guild	Advent Evergreens		SJW Flower Guild & Friends	
Opening Gatekeeper	BJ McKee & George Grzenda		N/A	
Closing Gatekeeper	Sandy Skelton		N/A	

	Christmas Day December 25 11:00am	The First Sunday after Christmas December 28 10:00am
Lay Readers	Lori Griswold	Candace Lewis
Acolytes	Arlo Stephens	Danielle Pharr
Ushers	Bettie Orr Stu Holcombe	Jerry Tanner Clint Adams
Greeters	Worth Gordon	Worth Gordon Carmen Curtis
Cart Drivers	Jill Owen	Danielle Pharr
Videography <i>(Service)</i>	David Burge	Tom Griswold
Videography <i>(Formation)</i>	N/A	N/A
Altar Guild	Cathryn Harrell	Sandra Jeffery Lynne Miller Laurie Morris Carolyn Franz Michael Jeffery <i>(Brass)</i>
Flower Guild	SJW Flower Guild & Friends	
Opening Gatekeeper	N/A	
Closing Gatekeeper	N/A	



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS

Church: 1895 Greenville Highway | Office: 1905 Greenville Highway

Mailing: PO Box 185, Flat Rock, NC 28731

828-693-9783 | www.stjohnflatrock.org

In the case of a pastoral emergency, call the Parish Office and dial 5.

Worship Services: 8:45 & 11:00am | Office Hours: 9:00am-4:00pm M-F

Sunday School for Adults, Youth, and Children: 10:00am

Holy Eucharist & Healing Service: Wednesdays 10:30am in the Wilderness Room

The Rt. Rev. José McLoughlin, Bishop

The Rev. Josh Stephens, Rector: rector@stjohnflatrock.org

The Rev. Patricia Tanzer Askew, Priest Associate: ptaskew@gmail.com

The Rev. Stephen Askew, Priest Associate: stephenaskew@gmail.com

Ed Tompkins, Director of Music & Organist: music@stjohnflatrock.org

Mims Yeargin, Director of Parish Communication & Administration: officeadmin@stjohnflatrock.org

Stacy Knapp, Financial Administrator: finance@stjohnflatrock.org

Missy Izard, Director of Christian Education: missy@stjohnflatrock.org

Kevin Hunt, Sexton: sexton@stjohnflatrock.org

VESTRY MEMBERS

Jerry Holt, *Senior Warden*

Jim Cooper, *Junior Warden*

2025

Kim Sanders

Patrice German

Laura Teel

2026

Jill Owen

Jon Fitzpatrick

Jim Gibbs

Sandy Skelton

2027

Kitty Olson

Catherine Popp

Steve Sittnick

PARISH OFFICERS

Marlin Sanders &

Bill Williams, *Treasurers*

Kim Sanders, *Clerk*

STANDING COMMITTEES

Appointments: Carol Rector

Buildings and Grounds Committee: Jerry Tanner

By Laws, Canons & Insurance: Jim Olson

Christian Formation: Missy Izard

Communications & Publicity: Joey Popp

Finance: Gary German

Historic Churchyard Committee: Sandy Rex

New Member Ministry: Brenda Hillyer & Judy Petersen

Outreach: Jennifer Shelton

Personnel: Margaret Barker

Stewardship: Jim and Jann Cooper

OTHER COMMITTEES AND MINISTRIES

Acolytes: Laura Teel

Altar Guild: Cathryn Harrell, Laurie Morris

Chefs of St. John: Jim Vint

Churchyard Trustees: Pete Petersen

Docents: Polly Morrice & Scott Bell

Endowment Trustees: Mike Teel

Episcopal Church Women: Elizabeth Christenbury & Cava Sittnick

Flower Guild: Patrice German

Flower Memorials: Gaston Motes

Funeral Reception Ministry: Brenda Hillyer

Garden Guild: Jerry Tanner

Gatekeepers: BJ McKee

Golf Cart Ministry: Jill Owen

Good News Gardeners: Cathy & David Burge

Greeters: Worth Gordon & Carmen Curtis

Heritage, Archives & Gift Committee: John Barker

Holy Hikes-WNC: Cynthia Easterling

Lay Readers: Mark Delk

Meal Ministry: Catherine Popp

Needle Work Ministry: Judy Petersen

Sustainability: Elizabeth Christenbury

Ushers: Clint Adams & Bettie Orr

Visitor Ministry: The Revs. Stephen Askew & Patricia Tanzer Askew

Wedding Coordinator: Elaine Howe