

generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Lector The Word of God for the people of God.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 23 *Dominus regit me*

J. Goss (1800–1880)

Sung by the choir

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd; *
I shall not be in want.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures *
and leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He revives my soul *
and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.
- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil; *
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; *
you have anointed my head with oil, and my cup is running over.
- 6 Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,*
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

The Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:19-25

It is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

“He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Lector The Word of God for the people of God.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Alleluia, *standing as able*

Celtic Alleluia

F. O’Carroll & C. Walker

Verse by A. Pandolfe

Refrain

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

*Choral Verse: "I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;**
I know my sheep, and mine know me."

The Gospel: John 10:1-10

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The Sermon

The Rev. Dr. Elaine Ellis Thomas

Silence for reflection.

THE BAPTISM OF WYATT WILLARD SAMPSON

Presentation and Examination of the Candidate *The congregation remains seated.*

Celebrant The Candidate for Holy Baptism will now be presented.
Parents & Godparents I present Wyatt Sampson to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.
Celebrant Wyatt, do you desire to be baptized?
Candidate I do.
Celebrant Will you be responsible for seeing that the child you present is brought up in the Christian faith and life?
Parents & Godparents I will, with God's help.
Celebrant Will you by your prayers and witness help this child to grow into the full stature of Christ?
Parents & Godparents I will, with God's help.

Then the Celebrant asks the following questions of the parents and godparents who speak on behalf of the infants and younger children.

Question Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?
Answer I renounce them.
Question Do you renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?
Answer I renounce them.
Question Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?
Answer I renounce them.

Question Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Savior?

Answer I do.

Question Do you put your whole trust in his grace and love?

Answer I do.

Question Do you promise to follow and obey him as your Lord?

Answer I do.

The congregation is invited to stand.

Celebrant Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support Wyatt in his life in Christ?

People **We will.**

Celebrant Let us join with Wyatt who is committing himself to Christ and renew our own baptismal covenant.

The Baptismal Covenant

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Father?

People **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

Celebrant Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People **I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People **I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

Celebrant Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you cherish the wondrous works of God, and protect the beauty and integrity of all creation?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant May Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and bestowed upon us the forgiveness of sins, keep us in eternal life by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayers for the Candidate

Celebrant Let us now pray for Wyatt who is to receive the Sacrament of new birth.

Intercessor Deliver him, O Lord, from the way of sin and death.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Intercessor Open him heart to your grace and truth.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Intercessor Fill him with your holy and life-giving Spirit.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Intercessor Keep him in the faith and communion of your holy Church.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Intercessor Teach him to love others in the power of the Spirit.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Intercessor Send him into the world in witness to your love.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Intercessor Bring him to the fullness of your peace and glory.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

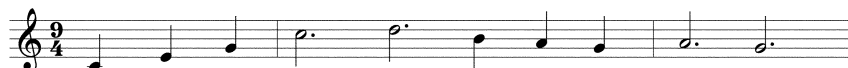
Celebrant Grant, O Lord, that all who are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ your Son may live in the power of his resurrection and look for him to come again in glory; who lives and reigns now and forever. **Amen.**

During the singing of the baptism hymn, parents, godparents, and family members are invited to join us around the font. Any other children who are present may gather at the font for a closer view.

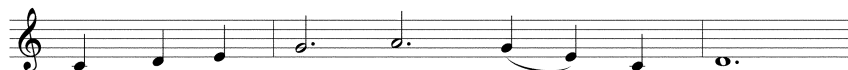
Baptism Hymn

“Baptized in Water”

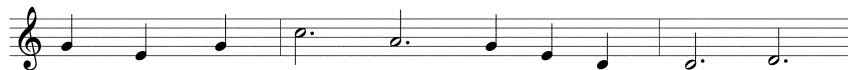
Bunessan



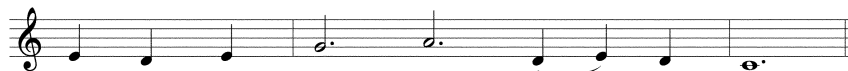
1. Bap - tized in wa - ter, Sealed by the Spir - it,
 2. Bap - tized in wa - ter, Sealed by the Spir - it,
 3. Bap - tized in wa - ter, Sealed by the Spir - it,



Cleansed by the blood of Christ our King:
 Dead in the tomb with Christ our King:
 Marked with the sign of Christ our King:



Heirs of sal - va - tion, Trust - ing his prom - ise,
 One with his ris - ing, Freed and for - giv - en,
 Born of one Fa - ther, We are his chil - dren,



Faith - ful - ly now God's praise we sing,
 Thank - ful - ly now God's praise we sing,
 Joy - ful - ly now God's praise we sing.

Text: Michael Saward, b.1932, © 1982, Hope Publishing Co.
 Tune: BUNESSAN, 5 5 8 D; Gaelic melody; acc. by Robert J. Batastini, b.1942

Thanksgiving over the Water

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water. Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of Baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit. Therefore in joyful obedience to your Son, we bring into his fellowship those who come to him in faith, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Now sanctify this water, we pray you, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that those who here are cleansed from sin and born again may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Baptism

Wyatt, I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Wyatt, you are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own for ever. **Amen.**

The baptismal candle is presented

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon this your servant the forgiveness of sin, and have raised him to the new life of grace. Sustain him, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give him an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. **Amen.**

Let us welcome the newly baptized.

We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood.

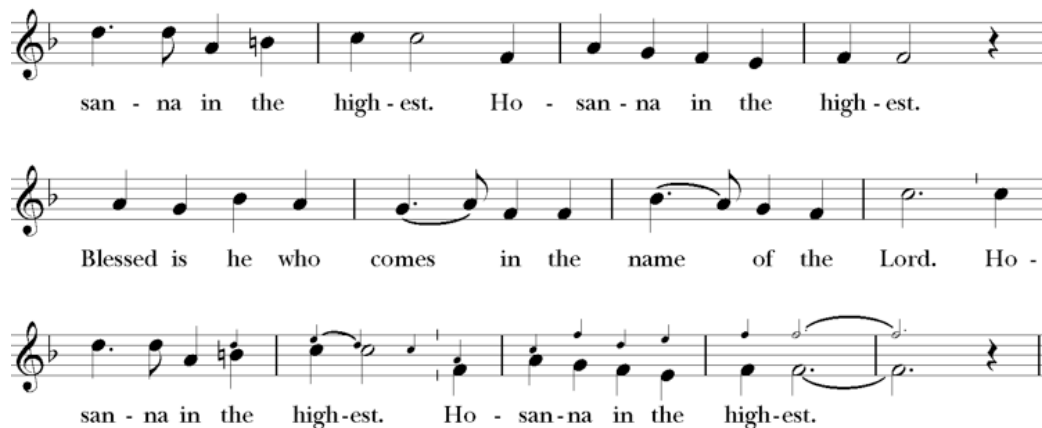
The Peace, *standing as able*

Celebrant The peace of the Risen Christ be always be with you.

People **And also with you.**

The ministers and people may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

You may be seated following the exchange of the Peace.



san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -

san - na in the high-est. Ho - san-na in the high-est.

The people may remain standing or you may kneel or sit as is your preference.

Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace.

But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love. Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people.

Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation. Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

On the night before he died for us, Our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus 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 poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues

Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus

Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world.

Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and sons, that with all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, forever and ever.



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

The Lord's Prayer, *said by 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 Breaking of the Bread

A period of silence is kept.

Fraction Anthem

Alleluia! Christ our Passover

J. Rickard (b. 1942)

Musical score for "Alleluia! Christ our Passover" by J. Rickard. The score is written for a single voice part in treble clef, with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It begins with a triplet of eighth notes (F#, G, A) marked with a '3' above them and the instruction 'f Forcefully'. The lyrics are: "Al - le - lu - ia! Christ our Pass - o - ver has been sac - ri - ficed for us; There - fore let us keep the feast, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia!". The score includes various musical markings such as accents, slurs, and a 'poco rit.' marking at the end.

St. John's Prayer List

Holding each other's joys, sorrows, and concerns before God in prayer is a spiritual practice that characterizes our life together at St. John's. In our worship services, we pray each other's prayers together. Outside of our time together many parishioners make it part of their daily lives to pray the prayers of the parish community. You are invited to participate in your own way.

Thanks be to God

for the gift of eternal life in the resurrection of our Lord;
for the promise of spring;
for those discerning a call to serve this community more deeply;
for all the blessings of our lives, and for the faith, fellowship, and ministries of this parish;

Your prayers are requested

for Wyatt Sampson who is to be baptized this morning;
for an end to the war in Iran;
for a path to sustained peace in Israel, Palestine, Russia, and Ukraine;
for an end to political and hate-fueled violence in our public spaces;
for the elected leaders of the United States that they will govern with wisdom, compassion, and concern for the poor and outcast;
for lasting peace to come to areas of violence in our world, especially Sudan, Nigeria, and Congo;
for an end to gun violence in this country and the courage for each of us to work toward that;
for all LGBTQI+ people who face bias and violence each and every day;
for members and friends of the parish who are sick, sorrowful, or in any kind of trouble, including Eileen Aiken, Ed Birch, Reginald Brulotte, Jinny Buracchi, Connie Cliffe, JoAnne Connor, Bea Comstock, Tony Custodio, Evelyn, Sherley Fergusson, Nancy Gould, Robert Henry, Ethel, Julia, and Jim Gribbins, Hazel, Erin Kraten, Dorothy Rider, Leona Savoie, Dione Solan, Gary Young, Jean Shaw, Tim Thomas;

Please note that any names on the prayer list will remain for a period of one month. At the end of each calendar month, the list will be cleared. If you would like to continue to have a name on the list, please contact the office after the first of the month.

for the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, including St. Andrew's, Milford; St. Peter's, Milford; Trinity, Milton;
for the Anglican Communion, including the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion).

We commend to God's never-failing care

those who have died, remembering especially the eight children who died by domestic violence in Shreveport on Sunday; the civilians and military personnel who have died this week in Iran; the dead in the ongoing violence in Sudan, Congo, Ukraine, Russia, Israel, and Gaza; in gun violence around this country; those who are dying in climate-related disasters; immigrants who have died seeking a better life; and for U.S. civilians and service personnel who have died in the line of duty;

and all whom we love but see no more.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Altar Flowers

If you would like to offer flowers on the altar for a particular date or occasion, there is a sign-up poster in the Parish Hall that lists the available dates. You may select an open date and confirm with the Parish Office the name or names in whose memory or in thanksgiving that you want to appear in the Sunday leaflets.

Bible Studies and Midday Eucharist

Morning Bible study continues on Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. with Part 3 of our Mark series covering chapters 6 & 7. Please bring a bible and your questions!

Holy Eucharist is also on Tuesday at 11:15 a.m. in the chancel (choir area) of the church.

Tuesday Evening Bible Study will continue with a discussion of Revelation this week at 5:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

Wednesday Contemplative Prayer is on hiatus. If this is something you might be interested in exploring in the future, please contact the office.

Westbrook Food Pantry Needs

Please continue to bring non-perishable food items for our neighbors at the Westbrook Food Pantry. Donations are collected each Sunday after morning services.

This week's collection is for **pasta and sauce**.

For the next two weeks, we will collect **canned fruits and vegetables**.

Bill's Blessings: This week we are collecting **hand soap**.

Next week we will collect **personal care wipes**.

Today!



ST. JOHN'S SPEAKER SERIES

Creation Care as a Spiritual Practice

———— **WITH THE REV. RACHEL FIELD** ————

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2026 AT 11:45 A.M.

Rooted in a lifelong love of the natural world, the Rev. Rachel Field invites us to explore creation care as a spiritual practice. With more than 15 years of experience leading creation-centered retreats in the Episcopal Church, she draws on her work in emerging ministries and her current role as Co-Owner and Co-Director of Heartberry Hollow Farm & Forest, a regenerative farm and retreat center in Vermont.

Rev. Field holds a Master of Divinity from Yale Divinity School and a certificate in Contemplative Leadership from the Shalem Institute.



Support the Speaker Series:
Donations help make future events possible.

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Last chance to sign up!

You're Invited to a Kick Off
Party to Launch...

ST. JOHN'S SOCIALS

Sunday May 3 from 4 - 6 p.m. in the Parish Hall.
Please bring an appetizer to share. Assorted
sparkling beverages will be provided.

RSVP to
meghan@stjohnsessex.org



Join us on May 10 for our next Second Sundays!



You are invited to

**SECOND SUNDAYS
at ST. JOHN'S**

**Beginning March 8 and continuing
monthly on the 2nd Sunday of the month
from 4:30 -6:30 p.m.**

**Intergenerational activities, fellowship,
food, fun, and a family-friendly celebration
of Holy Eucharist.**

**Come to the Undercroft, entering down the ramp
to the right of the main entrance of the church.**



**St. John's Episcopal Church
for information: 860-767-8095
www.stjohnsessex.org**

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Manuel Matute, *Sexton*

Dayle Larson, *Bookkeeper*

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Ernie Brainard, *Candle Master*

Marlene Going, *Weekly Food Collection*

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Dorrington, Pam duPont, Chip Goodrich, Donna Moeller, Jane Riggio, Kevin Walsh

WORSHIP

SUNDAYS | Holy Eucharist — 8:00 & 10:15 a.m.

TUESDAYS | Bible Study — 10:00 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.

TUESDAYS | Midweek Holy Eucharist — 11:15 a.m.

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

3 Cross Street, / (P.O. Box 422) Essex, CT 06426

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