

# Saint Mary's Newsletter: December

**Vicar:** David Smithson 027 4213200 Fridays

07 8492761 Afterhours

**Lay Minister:** Charles Clark 021 02691764

**Peoples Warden:** Sally-Ann Riddell 022 107562

**Vicars Warden:** John Heaton 021 702871



## SERVICES FOR DECEMBER 2023

### Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup>:

10am Advent 1 Holy Communion

**Refreshments:** Trish

**Readings:** Charles

**Intercessions:** Trish

### Sunday 10<sup>th</sup>:

10am Advent 2 Holy Communion (Reserved Sacrament)

**Refreshments:** Rosalie

**Readings:** Charles

**Intercessions:** Rosalie

### Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>:

10am Advent 3 Holy Communion

**Refreshments:** Karen

**Readings:** Charles

**Intercessions:** Karen

### Sunday 24<sup>th</sup>:

10am Advent 4 / Christmas Eve Holy Communion

**Readings:** Charles

**Intercessions:** Helen



**First Sunday of Advent**



**DEC 31<sup>st</sup> 2023 to JAN 29<sup>th</sup> 2024:** Please note that there will be no services between these dates. Services will resume Sun 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 2024.



For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

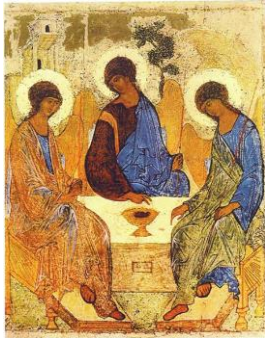
Isaiah 9:6

**Study and Prayer Group** meets every Weds up to Christmas @ the church 7 pm. Learning about the 39 Articles of our Faith. After the holiday's the group will reconvene. See Charles for more details.

## ARTICLES OF RELIGION

### A TABLE OF THE ARTICLES

1. Of Faith in the Holy Trinity.
2. Of Christ the Son of God.
3. Of his going down into Hell.
4. Of his Resurrection.
5. Of the Holy Ghost.
6. Of the Sufficiency of the Scriptures.
7. Of the Old Testament.
8. Of the Three Creeds.
9. Of Original or Birth-sin.
10. Of Free-Will.
11. Of Justification.
12. Of Good Works.
13. Of Works before Justification.
14. Of Works of Supererogation.
15. Of Christ alone without Sin.
16. Of Sin after Baptism.



Our beautiful Altar piece by **Andrei Rublev** (see info opposite) shows the Elohim visit recorded in Genesis 18:1-2, where Abraham was visited by three "men" one day; the "men" turned out to be unusual guests, to say the least, and the visit was life-changing for Abraham and Sarah. It says, *"The Lord appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground."* Abraham showed immediate hospitality to the three men, inviting them to rest under a tree and preparing a big meal for them (verses 3–8).

During their visit with Abraham, the three men warned him that God's judgment was about to fall upon Sodom and Gomorrah ([Genesis 18:20–21](#); [19:12–13](#)). They also promised that Abraham's wife, Sarah, would have a baby by the same time next year ([Genesis 18:10](#)).

Some have suggested that all three of these "men" were angelic beings who appeared to Abraham in the form of men. However, [Genesis 18:1](#) says that it was "the LORD" (*Yahweh*) who appeared to Abraham. It is the LORD who speaks in verses 13, 20, 26, and 33. Abraham stands "before the LORD" in verse 22. So, one of the three "men" must have been God Almighty taking on the appearance of a man. We call such an appearance a "theophany." When Jesus appears in His pre-incarnate body in the Old Testament, we call it a "Christophany." Whether God's appearance to Abraham in Mamre was a theophany or a Christophany, we don't know. But it does seem clear from the context that at least one of the visitors was God Himself ([Genesis 18:22](#)) and the other two were the angels who later visited Sodom and spoke to Lot ([Genesis 19:1](#)), or it was God as the Trinity.

Abraham's response to the appearance of the three men also suggests that he instinctively knew that he was in the presence of God. A typical response to visitors in that culture was to rise and wait for them to approach the home. But Abraham ran to meet them and "bowed low to the ground," a prostrate posture reserved for royalty or deity.

Abraham was well acquainted with the LORD and would have instantly recognized Him, because the Lord had spoken and/or appeared to him many times before. Those appearances include the following occasions:

- when God first called him ([Genesis 12:1–3](#))
- when Abraham parted ways with Lot ([Genesis 13:14–17](#))
- when God made a covenant with him ([Genesis 15](#))
- when God restated His covenant ([Genesis 17](#))

These three visitors whom Abraham entertained were heavenly, and Abraham and Sarah were in the company of God Himself. The story teaches us that God is aware of what is happening on earth, and He is involved. God can even visit or send His heavenly messengers to help fulfil His plans. We may not always realize whom we are speaking with, so we should treat everyone as though they were on special assignment from God. [Hebrews 13:2](#) reminds us, *"Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it."*

### **Andrei Rublev:**

Little information survives about his life; even where he was born is unknown. He probably lived in the Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra, near Moscow, under Nikon of Radonezh, who became hegumen after the death of Sergius of Radonezh in 1392. The first mention of Rublev is in 1405, when he decorated icons and frescos for the Cathedral of the Annunciation of the Moscow Kremlin, in company with Theophanes the Greek and Prokhor of Gorodets. His name was the last of the list of masters, as the junior both by rank and by age. Theophanes was an important Byzantine master, who moved to Russia and is considered to have trained Rublev.

Chronicles tell us that together with Daniel Chorny he painted the Assumption Cathedral in Vladimir in 1408 as well as the Trinity Cathedral in the Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius between 1425 and 1427. After Daniel's death, Andrei came to Moscow's Andronikov Monastery where he painted his last work, the frescoes of the Saviour Cathedral. He is also believed to have painted at least one of the miniatures in the Khitrovo Gospels.

The only work authenticated as entirely his is the icon of the Trinity (c. 1410), removed in 2023 from the Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow to the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. It is based on an earlier icon known as the "Hospitality of Abraham" (illustrating Genesis 18). Rublev removed the figures of Abraham and Sarah from the scene, and through a subtle use of composition and symbolism changed the subject to focus on the Mystery of the Trinity.

In Rublev's art two traditions are combined: the highest asceticism and the classic harmony of Byzantine mannerism. The characters of his paintings are always peaceful and calm. After some time his art came to be perceived as the ideal of Eastern Church painting and of Orthodox iconography.

Rublev died at Andronikov Monastery between 1427 and 1430. Rublev's work influenced many artists including Dionisy. The Stoglavi Sobor (1551) promulgated Rublev's icon style as a model for church painting. Since 1959 the Andrei Rublev Museum at the Andronikov Monastery has displayed his and related art.

