

St. Aidan's Episcopal Church

A Brief Overview of the Seasons of the Church Year, including Sundays and other Holy Days observed throughout the Year

In the Episcopal Church, we have a special calendar to guide our worship and life together:

- to refresh our minds of the events in Christ's life
- to assist in our devotions and direct our attention to the successive aspects of the Christian Mystery, namely

Seasons Fall into one of these general categories of Spiritual Significance

1. Preparation
2. Incarnation
3. Revelation the Life and Death of Jesus
4. his resurrection and ascension
5. the coming of the Holy Spirit
6. and the life of the church and of Christians

Advent Season (preparation)

- starts the church year
- Advent means "coming/arrival"
 - o solemn preparations, like Lent
 - o remember the first coming, wait on the second coming
- Color: Purple or deep Blue
- Worship changes: Rite I, wreath

Sundays are:

The First Sunday of Advent
The Second Sunday of Advent
The Third Sunday of Advent
The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Christmas Season (Incarnation)

- a time of celebration and rejoicing
- Light of the World has come
- Color: White (purity, joy, happiness)
- 12 Days of Christmas, ends 1/6

Sundays/Feasts are:

The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ:
Christmas Day, *12/25*
The First Sunday after Christmas Day
The Holy Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ,
January 1
The Second Sunday after Christmas Day

Epiphany Season (Revelation)

- Epiphany means "showing forth," "revelation," or "manifestation."
- Color: Green for growth and life
- Begins with the manifestation to the Gentiles/wise men, and moves on to Jesus baptism, then transfiguration
- The Light coming into the world

Sundays are:

The Epiphany, or the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, *January 6*
The First Sunday after the Epiphany:
Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ
*The Second Sunday through the Eighth Sunday after the Epiphany**
The Last Sunday after the Epiphany, usually Transfiguration texts

Lenten Season (preparation)

- from Anglo-Saxon Lenten=Long days, spring
- 40 weekdays long
- a time of preparation, fasting, and penitence
- starts Ash Wednesday
- color: purple or unbleached linen
- worship changes: Rite I, no alleluia, less singing, more simple/austere

Days and Sundays in Lent are:

The First Day of Lent, (Ash Wednesday)

The First Sunday in Lent (TODAY)

The Second Sunday in Lent

The Third Sunday in Lent

The Fourth Sunday in Lent

The Fifth Sunday in Lent

Holy Week (life and death)

- commemorating the last of the Lord's earthly days
- days for you to observe if you desire confirmation

Days are:

The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday

- entry into Jerusalem remembered in the liturgy of the Palms
- Color: purple or red

Monday in Holy Week

Tuesday in Holy Week

Wednesday in Holy Week

Maundy Thursday*

- from the Latin, *mandatum*, meaning commandment or rule—to love one another as I have loved you
- also the night Jesus instituted the Lord's supper
- the washing of feet (John 13:1ff)
- the altar is stripped to show how Jesus was stripped of his vestments

Good Friday* (crucifixion)

- the darkest day of the Christian Year, yet still GOOD—when the faithful meditate on the cross and Jesus' last hours

Holy Saturday

Easter Season (resurrection and ascension)

Easter Eve (The Great Vigil of Easter*)

- between sunset on Saturday and sunrise on Easter day
- "Easter" not a Biblical word: from the Anglo-Saxon *Eostre*, the spring fertility goddess
- the 1st Sunday after the full moon that occurs on/after the spring equinox, March 21.
- The Easter Season lasts 50 Days and ends with the Day of Pentecost
- Color: White
- worship changes: more joy, more singing, return of alleluia

* Triduum—from the Latin, *triduum*, meaning "three days." These three ceremonies, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Great Vigil of Easter, are really considering three parts of one service. There is no dismissal on Maundy Thursday and none on Good Friday, thus suggesting how the three are tied together as one piece—like life, death, and resurrection—distinct but part of the whole story of our redemption.

Days and Sundays are:

The Sunday of the Resurrection-Easter Day

The Second Sunday of Easter

The Third Sunday of Easter

The Fourth Sunday of Easter

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

The Sixth Sunday of Easter

Ascension Day (40 days after Easter, Acts 1:9)

The Seventh Sunday of Easter: The Sunday after Ascension Day

The Day of Pentecost:

- from the Jewish Feast of Weeks (seven weeks/50 days after Passover) to remember when Moses received the law on Mt. Sinai
- Now, we celebrate the gift of the Spirit to the Church, which gave birth to the Church (Acts 2)
- Color: Red, to symbolize the tongues of fire.

The Season After Pentecost

- six months long; often called “ordinary time”
- a time to remember the church’s growth and development, or
- our consideration and living into the significance of the church itself as the sign of Christ’s continuing presence and ongoing activity in the world

The First Sunday after Pentecost: Trinity Sunday (Color is White)

- Trinity not a word in the Bible, but an understanding of the divine which we remember and celebrate this day

The Second Sunday through the Twenty-Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

- the color is Green from here until Advent begins the year again
- The Last Sunday after Pentecost—often called Christ the King Sunday (ultimate victory and glimpse of Jesus on the throne and all reconciled before him.)

****All Saints’ Day, November 1, but often celebrated on the closest Sunday following November 1.***

Holy Days

Saint Andrew the Apostle, *November 30*

Saint Thomas the Apostle, *December 21*

Saint Stephen, Deacon and Martyr, *December 26*

Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist, *December 27*

The Holy Innocents, *December 28*

The Confession of Saint Peter the Apostle, *January 18*

The Conversion of Saint Paul the Apostle, *January 25*

The Presentation of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple,

also called the Purification of Saint Mary the Virgin, *February 2*

Saint Matthias the Apostle, *February 24*

Saint Joseph, *March 19*

The Annunciation of Our Lord Jesus Christ to the Blessed Virgin Mary, *March 25*

Saint Mark the Evangelist, *April 25*

Saint Philip and Saint James, Apostles, *May 1*

The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *May 31*

Saint Barnabas the Apostle, *June 11*

The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, *June 24*

Saint Peter and Saint Paul, Apostles, *June 29*

Saint Mary Magdalene, *July 22*

Saint James the Apostle, *July 25*

The Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ, *August 6*

Saint Mary the Virgin, Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, *August 15*

Saint Bartholomew the Apostle, *August 24*

Holy Cross Day, *September 14*

Saint Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, *September 21*

Saint Michael and All Angels, *September 29*

Saint Luke the Evangelist, *October 18*

Saint James of Jerusalem, Brother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and Martyr, *October 23*

Saint Simon and Saint Jude, Apostles, *October 28*

All Saints' Day, *November 1*

National Days

Independence Day, *July 4*

Thanksgiving Day