



276 Church Street, Montrose, PA 18801
Office 570-278-2954, Mon. to Thu. 8:15am to 1:00pm
Click on link to email St. Paul's: stpaulsmontrose@epix.net
Click on link to go to our Website: <http://stpaulschurchmontrose.org>
Click on link to go to our Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/stpaulsmontrose>

Mission Statement for St. Paul's: To proclaim God's love by word and example and to seek Christ in one another.

Dec 20 – 26, 2020

**Morning Prayer Sun. Dec 20 at 10:00am
online** <http://stpaulschurchmontrose.org>

**Christmas Eve Service Online Thu. Dec 24
at 6:00pm with The Rev Charles Cesaretti**

This Week's Lay Ministers:

Altar Guild: Carol Lasher, Barb Undercoffler &
Carol Marker

Announcements & Lector: Lynne Graham

Officiant: Vickie Calby

Readings for this week

First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Psalms: Cantic 15

Epistle: Luke 1:26-38

Gospel: Romans 16:25-27

"VIEW FROM THE PEW"

**This is an Advent reflection written by a
member of LifePath Church in Delaware. I
get these by email daily during Advent and
weekly, written by the pastor, during the
rest of the year.**

Lynne

Written by Eric Cebrat

I would like to tell you all about an experience I
had in elementary school that helped explain to
me what God's Grace is like.

One day the teacher called out sick and we got
a substitute. And with substitutes comes busy
work. We had to do some weird type of word
search where you look for the same word over
and over and it could be spelled diagonal and
backwards. The assignment was completed

when all the words are linked together in a
pattern.

Word searches are my kryptonite on a regular
day. This one was just beyond me. I kept
circling the wrong group of letters and then had
to erase. But erasing only works so many
times. If you try and erase too much you are
left with this gray smudge of failure reminding
you of all the times you wrote something
wrong. It never looks like it did when you
started. And if you keep on erasing you get this
weird crinkle hole in the middle of your paper.
So now you feel completely defeated because
not only do you not know the answer but your
paper is full of smudges and it is not a
complete piece of paper anymore.

I broke down and cried and that was really
unusual for me even as a kid. The substitute
asked me what was wrong and I showed her
my paper.

Before I tell you what her reaction was let me
start with what she didn't say.

She didn't react negatively and say "Stop your
crying and get back to work"

She didn't react apathetically and say "Just
keep trying until you get it"

She didn't even react educationally and say
"Let me show you how you could do better"

What she did was amazing. She told me it was
no big deal, smoothed my paper out and did
the assignment for me. In perfect teacher pen
she quickly made the pattern and gave the
paper back to me. She then told the class that
Eric had the right answers on his paper and if
they were stuck and needed a hint that they
could come see me.

It was just so completely above and beyond anything I could have ever dared expect. I was unable to do my assignment, ruined my paper, broke down, handed my paper to my teacher who did the work for me and then used me as a teaching tool for the rest of the class.

And that is what I think of when I think of Grace. When we have completely messed everything up and are unable to help ourselves, God comes down and helps us out. God gives us help when we are completely unable to help ourselves.



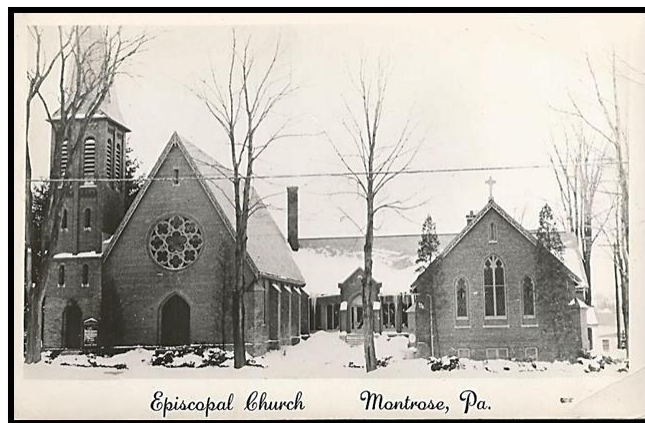
No Silent Night

Please join us next Sunday, December 20 for an old fashioned Christmas carol sing-a-long. We'll gather OUTSIDE at St. Mark's at 3:30. Invite a friend. The more the merrier! We plan to have an outside fire pit and music on the keyboard. Bring candles if you wish although some will be provided. Dress warmly and come make a joyful noise.



Reminder - Winter is Coming

And with winter comes winter weather!. While we will not get back into the church until the end of December, this is just the annual reminder to say: if there is ice or snow and there is a question about church being canceled, listen to WPEL at 96.5 FM.



The Episcopal Church in Upper Susquehanna County Invites You to Celebrate Christmas Eve.

You are invited to attend a warm, meaningful, and traditional Christmas Eve worship service with us online on December 24th. Organ music will begin at 5:30 and the service will begin at 6pm. Just log onto the St. Paul's Episcopal Church (Montrose) website at <https://stpaulschurchmontrose.org/wp/> and click on "Live Stream." A service bulletin is available from the website homepage under "Recent Posts".

The service will be conducted by Father Charles Cesaretti. MaryAnn DeWitt will be at the organ. And, a soloist from the Tri-Cities Opera will sing the hymns.

If you prefer to listen to the service, call in at 570-266-4915, and enter passcode 202195# or visit www.facebook.com/stpaulsmontrose to get details on how to listen in.

Earlier on December 24th, we invite all community members to drop by in-person from 4-5:45pm at one of our churches for private prayer and meditation. Although we will not worship in person, our churches will be decorated for Christmas. Visit us at St. Paul's (276 Church Street, Montrose), St. Mark's (115 Main Street, New Milford), and Christ Church (1107 West Main Street, Susquehanna). Celebrate the joy of Christmas with us!

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

For those who are ill or have requested our prayers: Margaret Burgh, Kathy Warriner, Naomi Bennett, Rita Leigh, Charlotte Ellis, Charlotte Eckert, Nancy Finlon, Patrick Gallagher, Johanna Masters & Jeannine Ball.

Birthday for December: John Warriner 12/31.

Our thanksgivings: We give thanks for those who celebrate their birthdays this week. *O God, our times are in your hand: look with favor, we pray, on your servants as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their lives. Amen.*

We give thanks for those celebrating wedding anniversaries this week. *Grant o God, in your compassion, that those celebrating wedding anniversaries this week may live out the covenant they have made. May they grow in forgiveness, loyalty and love, and come at last to the eternal joys, which you have promised through Jesus Christ our Lord; and may the blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with them this day and forever. Amen.*

Your tithes and pledges can be mailed to the church office at 276 Church St., Montrose, PA 18801.

Pastoral Emergency or Non-Emergency Contact: you can call the parish office during office hours. After hours call Lynne Graham 570-934-1160.

6 Photos this week.

Third Sunday of Advent, December 13, 2020

THE GOSPEL - There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing. (*John 1:6-8, 19-28*)

**Go, tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born!**

While shepherds kept their watching
O'er silent flocks by night
Behold throughout the heavens
There shone a holy light

Fr. Bill's Morning Prayer

It is the Third Sunday of Advent. We light the Pink Candle and remember that this is 'Gaudete Sunday.' ---Advent is full of nostalgia, old memories and symbols of bygone years. We wait, we pray, on this cold December morning, as Advent invites us to begin this liturgical journey of faith that begins with the 'Anawim.' Those few faithful souls who clung to the promises of the prophets, and the holy ones of old that one day, God would again lead his people out of the wilderness of their disbelief to a new kind of kingdom.

The message of the prophets in today's readings is no less relevant today for our world. Sad to say, it does not come in the form of a text message, or an e-mail on a thousand dollar iPhone. No, with quill and scroll, Isaiah wrote; "the spirit of the lord is upon me, he has anointed me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind the broken-hearted, bring liberty to captives, comfort the mourning and to proclaim a year of favor...."

They are fighting revolutionary words that should and could stir the mind, heart and soul of any listener particularly the young. They are Advent words, a clarion call to action, change and challenge. How often we have heard them chosen for an ordination down the years. How easily they have been forgotten by the many. Every generation of young Christian should read those words from Isaiah 61: 1--4. They tug at the idealism of youth. They speak of a better world, unheard by any Bluetooth.

In today's Gospel, John the Baptist walks out of the Desert to preach and baptize by the River Jordan. He speaks a singular truth, undeterred by authority, Pharisees and Scribes. Down the centuries he has become the archetype, for that lone voice of conscience in every generation, who sees wrong and evil and speaks out. "Where is that voice today?" We ask. When truth is called a 'lie' and the 'lie' becomes the truth.

Advent is the Season of the 'Few', the Anawim, who wait, pray, look to, another day and call all of us to account. Where do our hearts lie? What are our values today? Who and what is the God in our life that grabs our attention? Are we people of the world or people of the spirit?-- For the Christ we should believe in, was not interested in the Dow Jones Index, the state of the Stock Market. He was not born to build a financial empire. Nor was he born in a palace with white skin. No, Jesus was a Jewish-Arab born into poverty in a humble stable because '...there was no room at the Inn.'

So what are we Anawim to do in this Season of Advent? Like John the Baptist we are called to 'cry out', make straight the way of the Lord! That has more to do with being men and women of 'truth' rather than rebuilding the highway. The truth is hard work. The truth is at times painful. The truth is open to ridicule, abuse and sometimes subject to violence. That is nothing new. It happened to John. It happened to Jesus, why would we expect anything different?

We pray Lord, on this Third Sunday as we wait on your coming into our hearts, minds and spirit, that you bring us this one gift. 'Truth', that we hold fast to the truth your prophets wrote

and you proclaimed and taught with the example of our lives. Then and only then will we be Anawim. Amen.

Fr. William McGinty (Fr. Bill) of Christ Church, Forest City, writes a daily Prayer that he sends out in Email. If you would like to be on Fr. Bill's list just let Dan know.

December 13th Service - Gaudete Sunday

The third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called **Gaudete Sunday**. Gaudete is the Latin word for rejoice, and this Sunday is the time for us to rejoice because Jesus came and died so that we may live forever with him!



The December 13th live-streamed Morning Prayer service was led by Tom Undercoffler. It was the third Sunday of Advent and the third Advent candle was lit. Announcements and Readings were done by Vickie, and Mary Ann played the Prelude, the Organ Meditation, and Postlude. The service is available on YouTube. Our Christmas service will be officiated by Fr. Cesaretti and Live-streamed. Organ music will begin at 5:30 and the service at 6:00. The church will be opened from 4:00 to 5:45 for private prayer and meditation. Bulletins for the service, which let you participate in the live-streaming, will be sent out on Wednesday by email. If you want a paper one mailed to you, or know somebody that does, please call the office. Similarly, if you know someone that would like to get this Weekly Update, let us know.

Do you Remember?



Martha and Karen in the December 9th Independent



Who's that on the front page of this week's *Susquehanna Independent*? It's our own Martha and Karen. There was a real nice write-up on our December 2nd St. Paul's Curb Side Pick-Up Soup night and their photographer caught them in the middle of soup making. We hear the two celebrities are signing copies but you might have to talk to their agent! The writeup also appeared in the [Soup Nights Expanding to Warm Souls During Pandemic – EndlessMtnLifestyles.com](https://www.endlessmtnlifestyles.com) and the Diocese Newsletter.

Good job to the whole crew that helped. St. Paul's got some nice publicity.

Coats for the Community

St. Paul's distributed coats on Dec. 15th and 16th this week. Originally scheduled for the 16th and 17th, the weather got in the way. This will be the last coat give away of the year. This final distribution is coordinated to match Inter-faith's Christmas food basket and toy ministry and due to the snow, they moved up a day. We had to change our dates to meet their dates. But, flyers were put in with their goods indicating the change in dates at church and Betty updated our sign and it went off without a hitch.

