


276 Church Street, Montrose, PA 18801  
Office 570-278-2954, Mon., Wed. & Thu. 8:10am to 2:30pm  
Click on link to email St. Paul's: [stpaulsmontrose@epix.net](mailto: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. 26, 2021 – Jan. 1, 2022**

In person worship or you can watch live streamed on YouTube. Go to St. Paul's website <http://stpaulschurchmontrose.org> and click this red button  on the front page, which takes you to our YouTube page.



**Candlelight Christmas Eve Service** at 5:00.  
All are welcome. Ask your friends and neighbors to join us for this beautiful, moving remembrance of Jesus' birth.  
Christ Church at 4:30 and St Marks at 6:30.



**The Office will be Closed on Mon. Dec. 27.**

### **This Week's Lay Ministers:**

Altar Guild: Carol Lasher, Barb Undercoffler, Betty Smith & Carol Marker  
Officiant: Rev. Elizabeth Grohowski  
Announcements: Lynne Graham  
Camera & Broadcast: Andrew Wurth  
Lector: Tom Undercoffler Dec. 24 & Karen Blye-McAbee Dec. 26

### **Readings for Dec. 24**

First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7  
Psalm: 96  
Epistle: Titus 2:11-14  
Gospel: Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

### **Readings for Dec. 26**

First Reading: Isaiah 61:10-62:3  
Psalm: 147:13-21  
Epistle: Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7  
Gospel: John 1:1-18

### **Hail and Farewell**

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Our longtime Parish Administrator, Betty Depue, will be retiring this coming spring, enjoying seeing the country from the comfort of an RV. Thank you for your magnificent service, Betty. Please welcome Peggy Sheffler, who will be transitioning into this position over the next several months under Betty's tutelage. Peggy brings with her a wealth of experience and we look forward to working with her.

### **View from the Pew Giving**

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One Christmas I experienced the feeling of real giving, not the giving that comes from a quick selection from a department store, but

giving of oneself. I discovered that what actually cost me a small amount per person could not have a monetary value put on it.

At age sixty-one, my mother seemed to be experiencing memory problems. I asked my mother, a master in the kitchen, if she could pick out some of her favorite recipes from her rather large recipe collection. There was sadness in my heart when I realized she was having difficulty doing this rather simple task. She could not find some of her recipes, she was undecided about her selections, and she misplaced them in the process. I explained to her that I intended to make a cookbook dedicated to her. I asked her not to mention it to my six sisters and two brothers for I hoped it would be a pleasant surprise for our annual family Christmas gathering.

What started out as a simple cookbook took on a life of its own and became a "True Labor of Love" for me. I spent considerable time organizing the pages in my mind. I began searching for small black and white drawings to put on the pages to dress them up and add interest. Most of the pictures that appealed to me were of children playing from an era gone by. After considerable thought, I decided on a dedication page to my mother with an appropriate verse, "We hold our children's hands for a little while, their hearts forever." I came up with a suitable cover and a page to commemorate Christmas that year.

In a small way, on the last page, I tried to include my mother, stepfather, and siblings. I wrote down a childhood memory that came to my mind about each of them. I wrote how my sister Dorothy and I would always share a bedroom and we would talk for hours when we went to bed. At some point, our mother would yell up the stairs, "You two girls be quiet and get to sleep!" So, at that point we would have to whisper as low as we could to finish up our important conversation. To this day, I still love my conversations with my sister. What I decided to write about my older sister Linda still brings a smile to my face. I was in elementary school at the time. It was a summer day and we were both in the bathroom. She proceeds to break the news to me that there

was no Easter bunny. I will always remember where I was when I heard that piece of earth shaking news that I was not prepared to yet hear.

After I had made my originals, I then ran the needed number of copies. I scanned the office supply stores until I found a folder to hold the treasured copies. When I completed the project, the cost was minimal per cookbook.

The day came of our family gathering. The cookbooks had been finished for a few weeks. Each one was in its shiny plastic folder ready to be given. Just five days earlier my fears had been confirmed, my mother was diagnosed as having Alzheimer's disease. The cookbook took on even more significance to me.

It came the time to make my presentation. With my heart in my throat, I asked for the undivided attention of the thirty family members present. I explained to them that I had asked mother to pick out her favorite recipes, and these were the ones she had selected. At one point, my voice trembled with emotion. I quickly recovered and proceeded to share my thoughts on what I had decided to write on the last page about each one of them. We laughed and smiled. There was a feeling of warmth in the room. It was a day I will always remember.

As the disease progressed, my mother changed in many ways. The outer shell physically presented the woman I knew as my mother, but the words and actions were of someone else. Once and awhile a glimpse would reappear of the woman I had known. She touched my heart when on a few occasions she told me she was afraid she would forever misplace the cookbook I made for her. I would calmly tell her, "Don't worry. If you lose it, I'll just give you another. I have extra copies of it." She would reply in a somewhat relieved manner, "Oh, good."

My mother passed away six years later. There has been many times when I have thought back to that Christmas season. I'm glad I made the cookbook when it still meant

something to my mother. My thoughts often go back to that Sunday afternoon in December when my family gathered together. I was thanked many times over by my loved ones for a lovely day and the giving of that small cookbook. I have no doubt that I received much more than they did that day. I also know that the real value of the cookbook is priceless to me!

- Peggy M. Sheffler

### **Vestry Highlights December 16, 2021**

Deacon Liz opened the meeting with prayer and we approved the agenda.

We approved the minutes of November 18, 2021.

Deacon Liz read the Bible study scripture Luke 1:39-56 in which Elizabeth's baby leaped in her womb at the greeting of Mary. Elizabeth called Mary blessed and Mary sang the Magnificat praising God. We discussed the difficulty of being a young pregnant, unwed girl in that culture and what faith and trust it took for Mary to accept God's calling.

Deacon Liz reported that she has continued with pastoral calls and visits. She compiled the results of her interviews with Vestry members. She agrees with our assessment of a lack of ministry focus and will work with us to do some intentional planning in that area.

The Search Committee for a new Parish Administrator has interviewed the candidate and recommended hiring the candidate beginning the first week in January. The Vestry unanimously approved and thanked the committee for their work.

We voted to send our gas royalties money for this month to Christ Church in Susquehanna to buy shingles to replace the roof section over their kitchen.

We approved a deficit budget for 2022 with the understanding that we may catch up if we have line items with unused funds. We need to

encourage the return of pledges. We approved Deacon Liz's housing amount that she will claim on her taxes.

We again discussed Vestry nominations for the 2022-2024 term. St. Paul's Annual Meeting will be on January 16 after the service.

Deacon Liz closed the meeting with prayer and the meeting was adjourned.

Our next Vestry meeting will be **January 20, 2022** at 5:00 p.m.

**For those who are ill or have requested our prayers:** Margaret Burgh, Naomi Bennett, Rita Leigh, Charlotte Eckert, Nancy Finlon, Johanna Masters, Jeannine Ball, Sandy Nagy, Ray Arcario, Addie Evans, Carol Marker & Ellen Ely.



**Reminder with winter** comes winter weather!. 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.

**Birthdays for December:** John Warriner 12/31.

**Birthdays for January:** Charles Cesaretti 1/2, Karen Blye-McAbee 1/4, Molly Brunner 1/16, Anne Shafer 1/16, Bill Rathbone 1/18, Nathaniel Syle 1/20, David Calby 1/24 & Marsha Jones 1/26.

**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.*

#### **Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 17th**

**O come, O come, thou Lord of might,  
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times didst give the law,  
in cloud, and majesty, and awe.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**

**O come, thou Branch of Jesse's tree,  
free them from Satan's tyranny  
that trust thy mighty power to save,  
and give them victory o'er the grave.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**

#### **THE GOSPEL**

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

[And Mary said,  
"My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

**Pastoral Emergency or Non-Emergency Contact:** you can call the parish office during office hours. After hours call Deacon Liz 212-222-8109.



**Donations** You can scan the QR Code. Or go to St. Paul's Website and click the Donate Button for online giving. You can mail your tithes & pledges to the church office at 276 Church St., Montrose, PA 18801

**14 Photos this week.**

for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.

*Luke 1:39-45(46-55)*

**Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;  
behold, the King of glory waits;  
the King of kings is drawing near;  
the Savior of the world is here!**

### **Fr. Bill's View From the Pulpit**

The Sunday readings for the Fourth Sunday of Advent begin with a short reading from the prophet Micah. "And you Bethlehem of Ephrathah...." Micah is the shortest book of the Old Testament, but it has a strong message of a man who will come, and his name will be 'Peace.'

"What is my life worth?" we often ask ourselves, Lord. What have I accomplished, and if I went back in time could I have done better? Perhaps I could have walked a different road, chosen a different way; not made the mistakes I made! We all have our "It's a Wonderful Life" moments, when we stand at the bridge with George Bailey, wondering what went wrong, and was it all worth it.

This Sunday's Gospel story should give us the answer. The story of the very young, very pregnant Mary journeying to care for her equally pregnant cousin Elizabeth. For Mary has placed her future and the future of her child in the hands of God. Maybe she too will one day stand 'on the bridge', but her commitment is honest and true at the time. She recites a canticle we call the 'Magnificat.'

Alas, we are ourselves filled with self-doubt, forgetting that we never had hindsight, never saw the pitfalls, or the twists our journey would take. While we can all clearly see the mistakes, we never ever see the graces that flowed from our journey. Ah we need that Angel Clarence to show us what life would have been if we had indeed gone some other way.

Like Mary we have to accept Lord, that you chose this way for us. This was our destiny, our 'Magnificat,' our crooked way. There are no 'redos' in life, so we must soldier on. Like Paul we have to 'finish the race' and count our blessings.



And our blessings are many, hidden, buried, blossoming in some other Spring, flowering long after we too have passed that bend in the road. "See God I have come to do your will..." we read in the Letter to the Hebrews. Not an easy thing to do, Lord. We strain at the lease begging to go our own way. Maybe it is part of the human condition, maybe it is Babel calling our name, but we feel the pull.

We pray today, Lord, that you keep us faithful till the end. "My soul magnifies the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For he has looked with favor on the lowly." Mary's prayer is our prayer too. It asks us to trust in you Lord, to place our hand in your hand and to follow where your feet tread. Amen.

## **THIS WEEK**

### **December 17th Service**

The December 17th live-streamed 10:00 Deacon's Mass was led by Deacon Liz. Lynne Graham made announcements and was the lector. Cathy Hammons played the organ Prelude, Organ Meditation and Postlude, along with three hymns and a special ensemble by Nancy Houck and her students provided beautiful flute music. As always, the place to be after service is at the island in the kitchen where the hot coffee awaits. Our live-streamed services can be watched live or any time on YouTube.



### **Winter Solstice**

On Tuesday, December 21, there was almost a full moon and it was the Winter Solstice – the shortest day of the year. It got cold this week with clear skies and lots of stars. Winter temperatures came with the Solstice.

### **Greening Church**

After church this Sunday, St. Paul's traditional "Greening of the Church" took place. We missed Carol Marker's guidance. Tom and Barb Undercoffler brought a bag of pine boughs and our Memorial Garden supplied the holly with lots of berries. Our new manger appeared just in time for Joseph and Mary to arrive. The three kings started their long journey up our window sills toward the manger. The lanterns for the Christmas Eve service candles were added and swags were put on them. As always, a great time was had by all.



## Flute Ensemble

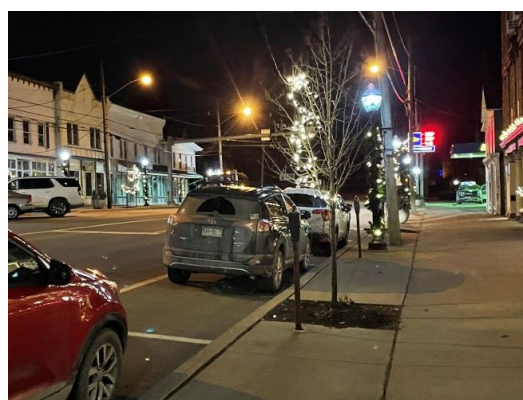
At the December 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday Service, flautists Nancy Houck, Grace Woods and Lydia Whalen played for us. This is the fourth year Nancy and her students have been at St. Paul's. They also performed for the Stop the Stigma luncheon last week and will be playing Christmas Eve. Their beautiful music adds to the service and is much appreciated.





## It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas

Well, it's starting to look like Christmas in Montrose. The streets are lighted and there's finally some snow-like weather. If you get a chance, drive through town at night and look around. St. Paul's always looks good too at night.



## Christmas at St. Paul's 1936

The Rev. Rev. Wallace Clifford Goodfellow had been at St. Paul's as its rector for five years when this picture was taken at Christmas in 1936. At that time, there was a large light at the center of the arch going up to the altar and garlands were hung from it. Evergreen trees were also placed on the "stage" going up to the altar, which was then on the back wall and the choir pews had greens on them. There was a large grate in the middle of the aisle that had a coal stove directly under it supplying the only heat. The service used the 1928 Book of Common Prayer and the 1916 (1918) Hymnal.



