

ST. PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Weekly Update

December 3 - December 9



276 Church Street, Montrose, PA 18801

Office 570-278-2954, Monday-Thursday 8:15am-3:00pm

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>

To proclaim God's love by word and example and to seek Christ in one another.

Our Vestry Members

The Rev. Elizabeth Grohowski

Lynne Graham, Sr. Warden

Vickie Calby, Jr. Warden

John Finlon, Treasurer

Sandy Seeger, Clerk

Tom Undercoffler

John Warriner

Vera Dunn

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.



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

Church Closures

Please turn your radio dial to WPEL 96.5 FM. We will announce any closure of our church service on that station.

View from the Pulpit: Mother Liz

Though ADVENT (literally “arrival”) has been observed for centuries as a time to contemplate Christ’s birth, most people today have no idea of what it means or of its importance. For the vast majority of us, December flies by in a flurry of activities, and “the holiday season” ends up being the most stressful time of the year.

It is also a time of contrasting emotions. We may be eager, or frazzled; sentimental, or indifferent. One minute we glow at the thought of gathering with family and friends; the next we feel completely lonely. Hope is often mingled with anxiety; anticipation can be overridden by anguish. We sense that there are deeper meanings of the season, but grasp at them in vain; and in the end, all the hustle and bustle leave us feeling frustrated and drained.

Even if we genuinely love Christmas – we may miss its most salient point. Content with candles and carols and good food, we bask in the warmth of familiar traditions, in shared acts of kindness, and in feelings of goodwill. We may overlook the harsh realities of Christ’s first coming (the dank cave, the cold night, the overbooked inn) as quaint and lovely, rather than bleak and potentially life-threatening. Mother Teresa once noted that the first person to welcome Christ was John the Baptist, who leaped for joy upon recognizing him, though both of them were still within their mothers’ wombs. We, in sharp contrast, are often so dulled by diversions such as TV, the internet, gaming, and the like, that we are incapable of hearing any voice within, let alone attending to it. Life can be so noisy and demanding. Often, the feeling that surrounds us as Christmas cheer lacks a deeper connection to the life-giving spirit of Jesus radiating from the manger because in our world today, Christmas has been very nearly relegated to being a secular event. I encourage you to take time, perhaps in the still, quiet, snow-covered evenings, to rediscover Advent as a season of inward preparation.

Do not allow yourself to miss the essence of Christmas. Meditate upon how Christ’s birth took place. Give yourself the gift of sensing that Advent marks something monumental: God’s coming into our midst. That coming did not only happen in the past. It is a recurring possibility here and now. And therefore, Advent is not simply a commemorative event or an anniversary, but an annual opportunity for us to consider the future, second Advent -the promised coming of God’s kingdom on earth. The love that descended to Bethlehem is not the insight of a benign God, but a burning fire whose light chases away every shadow, floods every corner, and turns night into day. This Love reveals sin and overcomes it. It conquers darkness with such forcefulness and intensity that it scatters the proud, humbles the mighty, feeds the hungry, and sends the rich away empty-handed (Luke 1:51-53).

A transformation of this scale can not be achieved by human means, but only by divine intervention, Advent (to quote Dietrich Bonhoeffer) might be compared to a prison cell “in which one waits and hopes ...But is completely dependent on the fact that the door of freedom has to be opened from the outside.” It is an appropriate metaphor. But that dependency does not release us from responsibility.

The essence of Advent is expectancy, and it is also readiness for action: watchfulness for every opportunity, and willingness to risk it all for freedom and a new beginning.

That is why the imagery of nativity scenes is not adequate to explain the Christmas message. Yes, God was laid into the feeding trough of an animal. But He lay there as far more than an infant. This child was the same man who was crucified on Golgotha, who rose again. Within the manger lies the Cross – and the hope of redemption and resurrection.

For us to recognize this requires reverence, humility, and faith.

We might ask, “What basis do we have for such hope?” Or we might seek instead, to become like little children, and believe. Mary did. So did the shepherds and the wise men of the East. So can each of us, wherever we are. May we be open to experience the true joy and blessings of this season.

View from the Pew:

Diaper Drive

The season of Advent is a time of patient waiting and preparation for what is to come. Every Christian knows that we await the birth of baby Jesus. There are many ways to prepare for the impending birth of a baby. Those with resources can buy changing tables, cute outfits, baby monitors, mobiles, and cribs. On the other hand, a baby can thrive just as well swaddled and tucked safely in a deep drawer to sleep. As long as love abounds, babies from both ends of the financial spectrum will be fine.

Regardless of resources, there is one expensive item that all babies, at least in this country, need. DIAPERS. Apropos to the season of preparing for baby Jesus, St. Paul's will sponsor a diaper drive. Any and all donations of diapers will be gladly received and passed on to CareNet and Women's Resource Center at the end of the Christmas season.

Office hours are Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 8:00-3:00 or donations may be left in the plastic tub at the top of the entrance ramp off Church St. Babies are expensive to raise, and we can make a young mother's burden lighter in this small way. Thank you for your generosity in this blessed season of hope.

- Lynne Graham

We would love for you to be included!

Article submissions (photos, community news items, or a personal or faith story) are due every Wednesday. This is YOUR newsletter, and all congregants are invited to share their stories and photos. Please email your items to Kate at stpaulsmontrose@epix.net or John Warriner at jdwarri@me.com; post an item to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 276 Church St. Montrose, PA 18801 on Facebook; or drop a note in the offering plate.

Sundays Service

Dec
3



Readings for this Week:

First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

Psalm: 80:1-7, 16-18

The Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Gospel: Mark 13:24-37

This Week's Ministers:

Celebrant: The Rev. Elizabeth Grohowski

Altar Guild: Sandy S. & Nancy D.

Announcements: Lynne Graham

Lector: Tom Undercoffler

Hospitality:

This week's Hymns:

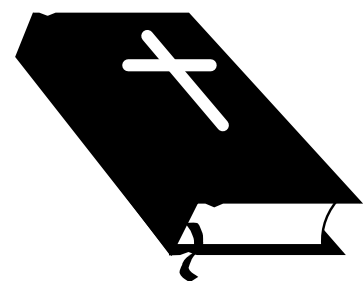
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Judge Eternal, throned in Splendor

O Day of God Draw Nigh

Sleepers, Wake! A Voice Astounds Us

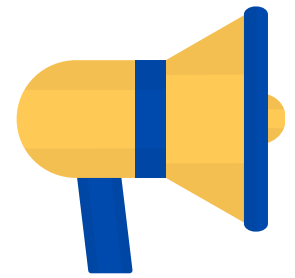
Thy Kingdom Come



This week's Gospel according to: Mark

Jesus said, "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Happenings and Announcements



Country Store is this weekend Dec. 2!

Head to town for Christmas in Montrose! It is the best place to visit to get into the Christmas spirit and maybe snag a few gifts at all of the vendors on The Green or the local shops that will be open. St Paul's participates with the Country Store and the North Pole Kitchen so stop by to enter to win a raffle basket or grab something to eat from the kitchen or the baked goods table!



For those who are ill or have requested our prayers:

Margaret Burgh, Naomi Bennett, Rita Leigh, Nancy Finlon, Carol Marker, Ellen Ely, Rev. Janet Watrous, Chris Moffett, Matilda Rogers

Pastoral Emergency or Non-Emergency Contact:

You can call the parish office during office hours. After hours, call Mother Liz 212-222-8109.



This Months Birthdays:

Dan Graham 12/4, Vera Dunn 12/13, John Warriner 12/31



This Months Anniversaries:

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.

Last Week's Service and Events

LAST SUNDAY - Twenty Sixth Sunday After Pentecost – November 26, 2023



Alleluia! Sing to Jesus;
His the scepter, His the throne.
Alleluia! His the triumph,
His the victory alone.



The live-streamed November 26th, 10:00 Ante-Communion Service was officiated by Lynne Graham who also did announcements. Rich Marker read as lector. As you know, our live-streamed services can be watched live or anytime on YouTube. Just got to our webpage and hit the red button.

Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion
thunder like a mighty flood:
"Jesus out of every nation
has redeemed us by His blood."



Coffee Hour

What a spread! The Warriners had to postpone their granddaughter, Everly Golden's baptism scheduled for this Sunday, but decided to treat us with the extra special coffee hour anyway. It was truly impressive.



Amato's Burgers & Scoops

There's a new burger place where OIP used to be at 401 Grow Ave. and it opened this week. The Amato's is now open and the burgers were pretty good. If you get a chance, check it out.



Turkey Soup

It's a long process from the Thanksgiving turkey to turkey soup for the Christmas Store, but cooking a pot of it sure makes the house smell good for the second time.



The Christmas Store is Coming

Yes, you heard it here. The Christmas Store is this Saturday, December 2nd. Here is an old picture from the Archives of Christmas Stores past. Who are these young ladies?:



Montrose 1941

Here's an old postcard dated 1941 taken right before World War II. It was a different time then. St. Paul's, while not shown, would be in the lower right. Church Street hadn't been expanded yet and look at that, there were streetlights then.

December Past Social Night

What a happy bunch of St. Paul's parishioners. It was a social night not that long ago in December at Karen's house and everybody looks ready for Christmas.



The First Snow

On Tuesday, it was snowing in the morning really hard and it may count as our first snow. It pretty much melted immediately, but we will have to check with the judges to see if it counts.



LATE - NOVEMBER IN SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY

“In November, the earth is growing quiet. The cold winds warn November’s done with and December will soon be here.” An early morning photograph looking east on Church Street taken from the HO Mart. Buck rubs on a small apple tree probably killing it. The woods have turned to brown and there was a full moon this week hanging over the hemlocks. It’s almost December in Susquehanna County.

