

ST. PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Weekly Update

December 31- January 6



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

Here we are on the cusp of a new year again. Time to make those new year's resolutions. I'll confess I don't spend as much time with God in prayer as I wish I did, and so this Excerpt from I Witness by Kate Moorehead stood out to me today. I make my prayer this day- Almighty God, I long to be with you as you long for me to come to you. May I be willing to take time this day to sit in prayer just for the sake of being in your presence. Amen.

The Fourth Day of Christmas - Crying Baby

She...laid him in a manger. Luke 2:7

When my boys cried at night, I bolted out of bed with urgency. What was wrong? What could I do? How could I help?

The cry of an infant is a sign that they need you, that they want to be held or they want you to look at them and be with them. It is a sign of the need to be loved. I want you to think of God in a different way this Christmas. I want you to think of God as the baby, I want you to realize that God cries out to you.

Many of us pray because we think it will help us, or we want God to help others. We think God will bring us more peace or understanding. But we are almost always driven to prayer because of our needs. We never stop to think that God might want us.

God chooses to become a child. God chooses to be born as the most dependent, small, helpless creature on the planet. God chooses to need us as a baby needs a mother as a child needs to be held, God chooses you, and God cries out to you.

When you pray, go to God as you would go to hold a crying baby. Rush to God, without thinking or analyzing or wondering how much time you have: just run to God. God calls out to you. God has designed this creation in such a way that God is crying to you to come and be with him.

Remember the Garden of Eden? Remember how Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? And once they had eaten that fruit, they realized that they were naked, and they hid from God. They separated themselves from God first; they did the leaving. And God wandered in the Garden, calling to them. Where are you?

God has been searching for you ever since. The baby cries out to you to come and hold him; come and be with him.

It is strange to think of us holding God. It is strange to think of God wanting to be with us. But God longs for us, yearns for us, cries out for us. The All Powerful One, the Maker of the Universe chooses you. God makes you for a purpose. Just you. God wants you for exactly who you are.

The baby Jesus wants you, and he cries out to you tonight. He cries to you through the poor who don't have a place to sleep. He cries to you in the ill and those who are mourning. Jesus calls out for you to come to him, help him, minister to him and with him. When you do anything for the least of these, you do it to me, Jesus says. I come among you as a baby who needs you.

And this day, I call out to you. Come back to me, God Says. Come home.

How do you hear God calling you through the needs of the world? How are you answering this call?

View from the Pew:

Fr. Bill

“John the Evangelist.”

St John the Evangelist and Apostle.....We know that John was the youngest of the Apostles and the brother of James and youngest son of Zebedee. He is first mentioned in the Gospels when Peter calls to his boat to lend a hand with the great catch of fish. After this miracle he and James, leave everything to follow Jesus.

John's Gospel is different than the other three, so called Synoptic Gospels. It makes no pretense at following any kind of chronological order. It begins with a prologue that was likely added later. “In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the God was God...” With this it follows closely the opening lines of the Book of Genesis.

Knowing that John's Gospel is the last to be written, you would expect to find traces of the other three Gospels among its pages, but this is not the case. John's Gospel plays with dualities: light and darkness; sin and grace; above and below; ascending and descending; heaven and earth; this earthly realm and the kingdom of God. ---John's Gospel asks fundamental questions and then attempts to answer them.

Who is Jesus? Why did he come? Was he the Messiah the Son of God? What does his death mean? --- John answers these questions in a very stylized way as if he is a lawyer presenting his case in a Court of Law. His Court is the Court of Public Opinion.

He begins with introducing John the Baptist as his first witness, linking the Old Testament prophets to this new era. Then to demonstrate who Jesus is, John describes six miracles. Except that he does not call them miracles, he calls them ‘Signs.’ Each of the ‘Signs’ beginning with the changing of water into wine at Cana, at a wedding feast, becomes progressively harder, culminating with the Rising of Lazarus from the death as the Sixth Sign.

Then John introduces his chief witness when Christ himself takes the stand. He does so in a series of long discourses that occupy the middle of John's Gospel. There is a polemic taking place between Jesus and the Pharisees, scribes, and elders of the Jewish people. They cannot understand because they are from below and are not speaking or hearing the language of the kingdom. Nor have they understood the teaching of the prophets. Jesus speaks the language of love, the language of God. The Gospel is often spoken of as ‘The Gospel of Love’.

Finally, John comes to the Trials and Death of Jesus which occupies one third of his Gospel. Here he clearly shows that Christ's death is a sacrifice. Through it he redeems mankind. As one scholar puts it: “When Christ has given all that he has to his teaching of the kingdom; when he has given all of himself to his ministry; then he gives up his very life for all that he believes, completing the circle of salvation and returning to his Father.”

This many call the ‘Self-Emptying Concept of the Logos,’ meaning that Jesus, ‘the Word’ gives his life for mankind. This sacrifice continues if we, his Body on earth, can emulate his ministry and teaching. A very beautiful Gospel. Amen.

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
31



Readings for this Week:

First Reading: Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Psalm: Psalm 147:1-21

The Epistle: Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7

Gospel: John 1:1-18

This Week's Ministers:

Celebrant: The Rev. Elizabeth Grohowski

Altar Guild: Sandy S. & Nancy D.

Announcements: Lynne Graham

Lector: Lynne Graham

Hospitality: Gaby W. & Teddy

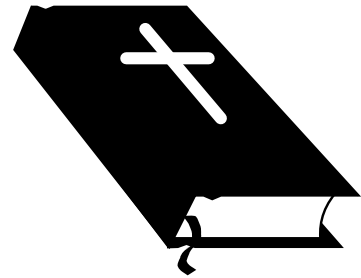
This week's Hymns:

Angels from the realms of glory

In the bleak midwinter

The first Nowell

Hark! the herald Angels sing,



This week's Gospel according to: John

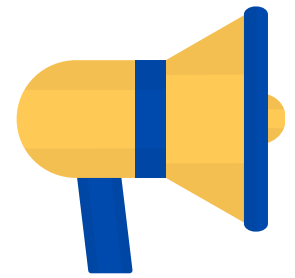
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

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. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Happenings and Announcements



Diaper Drive

The church is still accepting diapers for the diaper drive! If you aren't planning on buying diapers or going to the store, you can make a donation to us so that we can buy them for you!

We thank you in advance for your donations.

Soup Night

Soup Night again so soon?! Of course on January 3rd!! Come join us to dish out some soup for our friends and neighbors. This month is Split pea and Chili, so if you want to share a recipe or show off some cooking skills by bringing a pot of soup we would love to see your smiling face. As always if you bring your receipt, the church will reimburse you. Thanks in advance!



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, Richard Van Auken, Bishop Michael Curry, Bob Dunn

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:

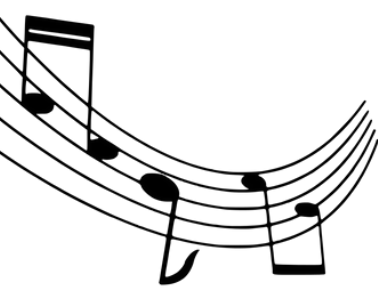
Our thanksgivings:

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 – Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, 2023



**Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven, and heaven, and nature sing**



The live-streamed December 24, 2023, 5:00 Holy Eucharist Service was officiated by Mother Liz. Lynne Graham read as lector. We were delighted to have Joyce Printz as our organist who played a prelude, five hymns, and a postlude. We were also blessed with the flute music of Nancy Houck, Grace Wood, and Sarah Kincer. As you know, our live-streamed services can be watched live or anytime on YouTube. Just go to our webpage and hit the red button.





MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL



Winter Solstice

On Thursday, December 21st, at 10:27 p.m., the winter Solstice arrived. It's the shortest day of the year. This was taken Thursday at sunrise, which wasn't until 7:30.



Waiting for Snow

This hay bale snowman is waiting for snow. Doesn't look like there is any in the immediate future.



Where are these Guys?

John's granddaughter Gabby placed the Baby Jesus in the manger on Christmas Eve, but somebody asked where the three kings were. They have started their trip to Bethlehem on the back windowsills. Keep an eye out for their movement.



Seasonal Diaper Drive

While we're celebrating the arrival of baby Jesus, what an appropriate time to think of diapers. We have had a good response. Throughout the remainder of the Christmas season, we will continue to collect donations of any size diapers that will be distributed to CareNet and Women's Resource Center. Thank you for your generosity!

St. Paul's Snow Birds

Bobby and Vera give a shout out from Florida and wish all of us a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



Lasher's Christmas

Jack and Carol sent a picture from Pittsburgh where they were spending Christmas with the family. They sent a Merry Christmas from Mt. Washington Overlook.

LATE DECEMBER IN SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY

