

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Weekly Update

December 15- December 21



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.

Pastoral Emergency or Non-Emergency Contact:

You can call the parish office during office hours. After hours, call John Warriner at 570-278-2317.

Our Vestry Members

John Warriner, Sr. Warden

Vickie Calby, Jr. Warden

John Finlon, Treasurer

Wanda Peirce, Clerk

Jack Lasher

Dan Graham

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: Father Bill

Early in the morning before any parents are up, there was the sound of tiny feet thumping on the stairs! Christmas morning in your home, all those years ago, Christmas tree and Holly and sprigs of mistletoe. Dressing Gowns over PJ's and mugs of coffee too, no time yet for breakfast, open one gift and get ready for church.

Soon Lord, there is Mom and Dad and the wrapping paper begins to fly. Dad wondering why he gets socks and 'pullies' way too bright! There is way too many girls here, all under one roof. They have emptied half of Oxford Street, Liberty's and Macey's too. There are books to read, and boots to wear and lots of things to do with hair! Dad decides to take the dog for that Christmas long, long walk. It will end at the Walker's Arms, where the men will greet each other, the dogs will sniff each other's nose and settle by the log fire.

So this today Lord is our prayer, remembering 'Christmas Past'. We can't help it. We miss them, because we thought it would last and last. Now the Old House belongs to someone else and Mom and Dad have some heavenly home, the Golf Course is still there, but the trees are bare and no one can remember a 'White Christmas.' --- Generations have arrived on top of generation, but they don't walk or see the birds, or the Christmas trees that twinkle.

We can't complain Lord, yet we do! --- It is just a little whine. This year we leave it up to you to sort everything out in time! --- Someone is buying me colored socks, when I only ever wear white, and that sweater is for a XXXL man, I'm sure that isn't right! So time to take the dog for that walk, before the grandkids arrive. The Pub is closed in lockdown so we will have to walk in the Park. There is sure to be some guys there with lots of brand new sweaters, that arrived from Amazon last week. ---"Thank God, they don't make me wear one!" said that little dog of mine. Looking up at me with pity, in his laughing eyes.

"Merry Christmas, Jesus" Thank you for Coming into our lives. May we strive to deserve you, each and every day. Amen.

View from the Pew: Dan Graham

Covid Christmas 2020 (Originally written this week, December 2020)

Lynne and I were discussing last week, whether or not we were going to put a tree up this year – and really, if we were going to decorate at all. Covid has been a downer and has weaseled its way into dampening our Christmas spirits. We are Christmas shopping only online and none of the kids or grandchildren are coming this year. But regardless, I halfheartedly went with Lynne over to the garage and looked at the boxes of Christmas stuff to decide what, if anything, would make the cut. The boxes were marked as wreaths, decorations, lights, candles, ornaments, etc. But there was one that caught my eye – manger. With it, came a flood of Christmas memories.

When I was about eight, we were at the Ben Franklin 5 and 10 store in my town right before Christmas and they had manger sets for sale. They included a cardboard manger, and in addition to the three main players, had a donkey, a camel, some shepherds, and the Wise Men. You could even buy extras for .25 cents. Mom bought it. When we got home, I set it up on the end table near where we would put the tree. It must have been a good location as it was set up on that same table every Christmas after that.

The set saw some changes over the years. Dad and I built a more substantial structure out of wood and glued straw on the roof. Somewhere along the line, I added popsicle sticks; a hole was drilled in the back for a light. Some of the players left – my dog Dusty ate one of the shepherds – but new ones were added. After Christmas, when we were putting stuff away, all the little figures got rolled up in tissue paper and put inside the manger for safe keeping. There they languished in our cubby with the other decorations waiting patiently for another year.

When we had little ones, Mom and Dad gave us the manger so we ended up with it. Every Christmas since, it has been set up in our home, initially by our kids, and later by us when they left and then by our grandchildren. I often wondered if the little people get lonely during the year waiting to be unwrapped and set up. They are faded now and dinged from years of faithful service. The manger roof has lost most of its straw and there are only traces of the fake snow sprayed on years ago when that was cool. But that manger and its figures have come for me to represent Christmas, and all it has meant. Not only for the obvious reason, that's what it's about of course, but for all the multi-generational warm family memories associated with that wooden box and its inhabitants.

Many of our Christmas traditions are under siege this year and will be tested. But don't let Covid ruin the specialness of this season; keep your spirits bright. Don't bemoan lost traditions, embrace new ones. Christmas in 2020 will be different in many ways but it will still be Christmas. While all our decorations may not go up this year, the manger will be set up. With it, the reminiscences of sixty-plus years of Christmas' past.



Sundays Service

Dec
15



First Sunday of Advent

Readings for this Week:

First Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-20

Psalm: Canticle 9

The Epistle: Philippians 4:4-7

Gospel: Luke 3:7-18

This Week's Ministers:

Celebrant: Susan Treanor

Altar Guild: Barb U. & Sandy S.

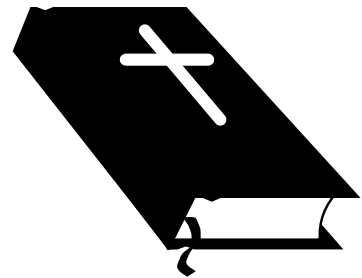
Announcements: John Warriner

Lector: Vickie Calby

Hospitality: Lynne Graham

This week's Hymns:

Comfort, comfort ye my people
Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding
Lo! he comes with clouds descending
On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
Soon and very soon



This week's Gospel according to: Luke

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

Happenings and Announcements

Harry Peirce Update

After a rough week of up and down days, Harry seems to be back on track. Fingers crossed. Had a blood transfusion on Thursday and finally by Saturday got some pep back and was off vent for about 7 hours. Sunday was a resting day and watched the Eagles game with his friend Cliff. Today was a really good day. In chair for 3 hours and off vent for 8. Taking it slow and easy. Lots of clowning with me, P-char, Walt, Anna Marie and the staff. Best was his huge smile when I showed him the beautiful gift from our friends Rich and Carol Marker. A portrait of Babe Ruth by Rich. We are blessed with wonderful family and friends.

"One moment at a time-prayers work." -Wanda



For those who are ill or have requested our prayers:

Margaret Burgh, Naomi Bennett, Rita Leigh, Nancy Finlon, Carol Marker, Harry Peirce



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

Second Sunday of Advent, December 8, 2024

Hark, a thrilling voice is sounding;
'Christ is nigh,' it seems to say;
'cast away the dreams of darkness,
O ye children of the day.'

The December 8th, 2024, live-streamed 10:00 Morning Prayer service was officiated by Vickie Calby. Shelly Green served as lector. John Warriner read the announcements. Penny Jagers played a prelude, 3 hymns and a postlude on the piano. As you know, our live-streamed services can be watched live or any time on YouTube. Just go to our webpage and hit the red button.

Collections for Diapers

Once again, during Advent, we will sponsor a community diaper drive to help us focus on the birth of Jesus. Please bring in donations of any size diapers and put them on the chairs in the choir section. Thank you for your generosity.



Coats for our Community

Coats for Our Community have one more distribution date. It's at St. Paul's. They will be set up here to coincide with Susquehanna County Interfaith's Christmas Bureau on December 18th and 19th. We have distributed over 1,200 coats so far at eight sites plus the Food Bank. St. Paul's teams with the guys from the American Legion, below, who help deliver and set up at 9 different locations in the county. The Montrose High School Key Club under Ms. Halliburton will be setting up the coats here next week.



The Country Store 2024

On Saturday, St. Paul's hosted its annual Country Store as part of Christmas in Montrose. We want to sincerely thank everyone who helped. You know who you were!





Old Snow Picture

Here's an old picture of a really big snow from Montrose winters past. This is looking down the right (west) side of South Main Street from where the light is. Wow, that's some snow!

Petting Zoo

On Saturday, the folks from the petting zoo came and set up. We had 2 donkeys, a sheep, and three goats in the Memorial Garden. In addition, there was a baby kangaroo on the stage in the Parish Hall for the kids to pet. Sort of like our own manger.



Picture from Christmas at St. Paul's, 1936

This picture was photographed in 1936 -- eighty-eight years ago. The church was about 80 years old and the parish hall next door was just seven years old. It was taken at Christmas. There were some differences then. The choir was still on the altar stage and the altar itself was set against the back wall so that the Priest's back was to the congregation. You can see the big grate in the middle of the aisle which let the coal-fired heat up. There was an electric light at the peak of the arch which is no longer there. Garlands were tied to it and hung from the sides. Live evergreens were placed at the front of the church. I wonder if Esther attended service that week as a wee one?



EARLY DECEMBER IN SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY

“God rest ye, merry gentlemen, let nothing you dismay, For Jesus Christ, our Saviour, was born on Christmas day.” After a dry mid and late summer, we have made up for it in the last couple weeks. There was still some standing snow the beginning of the week, but it’s all gone now. The streams are up and there is flooding. The red winterberries were heavy this year and you can see how high deer are because they ate all the ones below. It’s Salvation Army Time – Christmas is coming the goose is getting fat, please to put a penny in the old man’s hat. Or, put some change in the red bucket at Price Chopper.

