

ST. PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Weekly Update

December 8- December 14



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

The First Sunday of Advent. The First Sunday of the Church Calendar Year. Advent is that Season, that has a mix of everything. It has a freshness, because it introduces the beginning of the New Church Year. Foremost, is the idea of Advent as a time of preparation, for the coming of the Christ. All the readings reflect this 'messianic' theme. Lastly, and traditionally, Advent is a time of Christian Repentance.

Our First Read, for this First Sunday, begins with Jeremiah, the prophet, Chapter 33. It speaks of God's promise to raise up a Messiah, from the line of David. It does not mention Kingship, but rather justice, peace and righteousness.

The Israelites are people with long memories, who know only too well, how to connect the dots of their journey. They remember the promise to Abraham, the blessing of Jacob, the promise of the Covenant; now that promise is renewed in terms of a Messiah.

The Second Reading has Paul, the Apostle, praising the Christians in Thessalonica. The letter is couched in the language of love, for all the Thessalonians have done to grow the faith, that Paul and Luke planted as a seed, on their third missionary journey. It would seem, that at this stage, Paul with many others is still expecting, Jesus' second coming, or return in the very near future. This theologians call 'eschatological expectation'. As such, it is a very Advent-like theme.

This eschatology is continued today in the Gospel reading, where Jesus talks to his disciples about the 'end times'. Any time we read of the 'end of the world,' or 'the coming of the kingdom'; maybe even 'the last judgment', eschatology or the realization of Christ coming a second time, becomes Apocalyptic. What does that mean? Well, it means the end of the world is near.

Jesus asks his disciples to read the signs. Just as they know when summer is approaching, so they will know when the world will end. There will be wars, famine, earthquakes and many more signs. We could well read these signs today and believe that God's plan for mankind is drawing to a close. There is a certain logic to this, as we read about Climate Change, wars and the abandonment of faith, church, and God today.

2025, would seem to be a good number to contemplate such an event. Think back, there were two thousand and twenty-five years, from Abraham and God's promise till the Coming of Christ. Today there is two thousand and twenty-five years, from the birth of Christ till now. Hebrews love to play with numbers and their significance.

Advent invites us to read the 'signs of the times,' in our own lives. To put right the things that are wrong. To prepare to invite Jesus Christ, the Son of God, into our minds, hearts and spirit. In many ways, it is what Advent is about. We will read of Mary, Joseph, Zachariah and Elizabeth and their faithfulness to that holy relationship with God. Advent asks us to do the same. Amen.

View from the Pew: Dan Graham

Christmas Traditions

Well, it's December! Christmas is just a couple of weeks away. A friend was talking to me the other day about his family's Christmas traditions while growing up. I guess every family had them. Our family went to church on Christmas Eve and opened our presents when we got home. We went to my grandparents' house Christmas Day where I always got to open my wrapped 3-pack of tighty-whitey underwear that I had to look surprised when opening and write a thank you note for. (Boy, I'd like to see some of those notes! Bet they were gems!)

But I guess one tradition does jump out. The one I remember that I waited for most was getting to set up the Lionel train set. It heralded the start of the Christmas season at our house. For eleven months of the year, our train set sat in the attic waiting for December to come. My brother and I were allowed to set it up the 2nd Saturday in December and it was something that I remember looking forward to.

The train set itself had quite a history. My parents got married in 1942 right before Dad went into the Navy. My brother was born in August of 1943 and Dad went to the Great Lakes for training that September. He left a young wife and one-month-old baby and didn't get back until early January 1946. Since Dad and Mom had missed two Christmases, my parents decided to have one that January. There was a problem though. My brother, who was now two and a half, thought he and Mom were doing quite well without this new guy. Mom said every time they would kiss, he would get between them and push saying "no". He didn't want Dad to participate.

So they came up with a plan for my Dad and my brother to do a big boy thing together – they went to the Ben Franklin store and bought a Lionel train set to put under the tree. It contained a black engine, two middle cars and a caboose, track, transformer and hookup wire. They picked the one that you could put smoke pills into the engine stack and it would puff smoke. Being January, they couldn't find a tree so my Mom made one out of cardboard. After the tree was up, Dad and my brother assembled the train tracks to go around the tree and got the train going. The plan must have worked because as far as I know, my brother let Dad into his family.

So when I came along, a Christmas train set up was already a tradition and I became a part of helping my brother set it up. In addition to the initial set, a station and a couple Plasticville houses had been added along the way. As I got older, I would put some of my December “disposable income” into buying an unlimited number of accessories for the train – bridges, little people, cars, crossings, etc. My December birthday money, Christmas money, and paper route money often was used for additions. The largest expenditure I can remember was for a train car with a cop with a club who chased a hobo around the car roof while the train moved.

Anyway, somewhere along the line, we added a piece of plywood for a base; painted roads and grass, and we set it up in our living room. One year we sprayed everything with fake snow out of a can but it ate the plastic houses – we kept our set up snowless after that. As an adult, I don’t know how my parents let us take up the entire living room with the set for even one Christmas. When they saw the light after a couple of years, we had to set it up in the basement.

The train set always came down the weekend after New Year’s Day then was put back in the attic for its 11-month sabbatical. All the train cars were put back in their original orange boxes and the little people and other paraphernalia rolled in a tissue. Christmas was over. But on the second Saturday in December while growing up, setting up our Lionel train set and the little world that came with it was a treasured tradition. What were some of yours?

Sundays Service

Dec
8



First Sunday of Advent

Readings for this Week:

First Reading: Malachi 3:1-4

Psalm: Canticle 16

The Epistle: Philippians 1:3-11

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

This Week's Ministers:

Celebrant: Vickie Calby

Altar Guild: Barb U. & Sandy S.

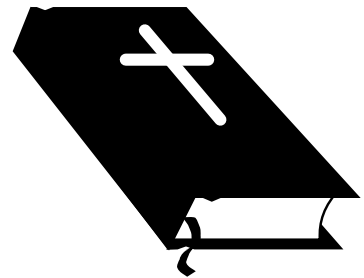
Announcements: John Warriner

Lector: Shelly Green

Hospitality:

This week's Hymns:

Once he came in blessing
Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding
Oh heavenly Word, eternal Light
The Lord will come and not be slow



This week's Gospel according to: Luke

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

Happenings and Announcements

The Country Store

The Country Store will be on December 7th this Saturday and it's coming fast. As always, we will have our North Pole kitchen with hot lunch; raffle baskets; and the bake table. Monetary donations towards the raffle items are most welcome. We always need volunteers, so just show up!!



Sleeping Bags is next Wednesday, if you can tie a knot then you can help!



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

First Sunday of Advent, December 1, 2024

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here, Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

The December 1st, 2024, live-streamed 10:00 Holy Eucharist Service was led by the Rev. Susan Traenor. John Warriner served as lector and also read the announcements. Penny Jaggers 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.



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.



Painting Class Winding Down

The painting class that meets Monday and Wednesday in the Celtic Room is winding down. Here all the painters are showing their works. Andy Ring also painted the cow scene.



Collections for Diapers and Stuffing

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. Interfaith is requesting 50 boxes of stuffing mix again this year for the Christmas dinner baskets. All donations can be placed on the front pew. Thank you for your generosity.



Old Snow Picture

This was taken four years ago this week of a snowstorm that started while we were at church. One of our parishioners is looking out at it and lost in his thoughts. Can you guess who it is?



The Undercofflers visited Naomi Bennett

Tom and Barb Undercoffler visited Naomi Bennett yesterday and she sends a shout out to everyone.



EARLY DECEMBER IN SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY

“Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is time for home.” It’s been cold. After 13 inches two Fridays ago, the snow melted but snowed again Thanksgiving a couple inches which, due to cold, did not melt, The dogs have their deer scarves on for deer season. With the snow come winter sunsets. Beautiful. Stay warm, it’s three weeks until Christmas.

