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Upcoming Events

Sunday Holy Eucharist
8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.,
In the Church

Dec 24 through Jan 1
Church Office Closed
Merry Christmas

Friday, December 21
Blue Christmas & Pot-Luck
Dinner
St. Paul's by-the-Sea

Sunday, December 23 11am
Greening of the Church
St. Paul's by-the-Sea

Monday, December 24 5pm
Christmas Eve Family Service
Rite II with Music
St. Paul's by-the-Sea

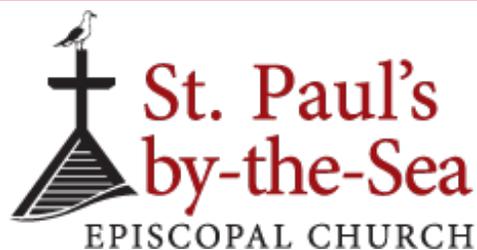
Tuesday, December 25 9am
Christmas Day Service
Rite I without Music
St. Paul's by-the-Sea

Tuesday, December 25
11am-2pm
NOEL Dinner
St. Paul's by-the-Sea

Sunday, December 30 9am
Carols & Lessons Service
No Eucharist
St. Paul's by-the-Sea

Sunday, December 30 11am
Parish Breakfast prepared by
John Bunting & his Team
St. Paul's by-the-Sea

Saturday, January 5
Twelfth Night Celebration



Bishop San's Christmas Message

Christmas is the season during which the whole church celebrates the theme that is most central to our Christian theology and faith: God's incarnation: "God is present in us and in the world, working for our healing and growth, our direction and our comfort, our reconciliation and our redemption." This is the fundamental Christmas message to us in this age as it was to the preceding ages.

Here we are again, the church and the world, celebrating together the joyful festivities associated with this time of the year - the birthday of Baby Jesus. Christmas (Christ-mass) is when the community of faith gathers around the table of the Lord to share in the Great Thanksgiving honoring what God has done for all humanity.

Jesus' birth is one of the holiest events in the world, and with it comes the awareness that God has come down to dwell with us in human form. Dwelling within us, he is transforming the darkness of this world associated with evil; he is turning sin and brokenness into light and wholeness. God's insurmountable love is personally inhabiting each of us for goodness and righteousness.

At Christmas we hold true to the faith that genuine hope, and new life, are breathed into our lives so we may start afresh. We are once again called to believe in God who first and foremost believed in us; enough to risk his son Jesus to be born as one of us. Recalling the first Christian family, Joseph, Mary and Jesus - the model of all



Shepherd's Crook Shopping List

**The following items are
always needed and always
welcome:**

Bottled Water

Tuna - packed in water - 5 oz.
cans

Vienna Sausage

Canned spinach, collards, pinto
beans, kidney beans

Fruit - cans or plastic one-
serve containers of pineapple,
peaches, pears, oranges

Soups - anything Progresso,
Tomato, Chicken Noodle

Pasta Sauce (in non-glass
containers)

Pasta

Macaroni and Cheese boxes

Christian families, and the host of heavenly presence associated with his birth - the love we see in Jesus' family is the love that we are called to show and embody to everyone.

God first loved us, sending his Son into the world as the perfect and wholesome gift to all humanity! It is this gift that began the well-known and much advertised tradition of gift giving Christmas is known and celebrated for over the years.

Furthermore, the message of Christmas is one of peace and goodwill to all. We share it with each other in a spirit of love, kindness, generosity and self-sacrifice. The barriers, some visible and others invisible, are shattered, even if temporarily, so the light of the Christ child may shine clearly in the lives of us all.

It is no secret that we face many threats and challenges on a daily basis, enough to cause the best and most resilient to question God's presence. The Christmas message collapses all those anxieties and fears, transforming them into optimistic and hope-filled expressions of a better tomorrow. Let us summon our resolve to be confident in the power of God to change the world through his Son born in Bethlehem's stable.

Friends, lest we forget, Jesus was born into a world overwhelmed by fear, corruption, oppression, greed, hatred, malice and political instability. There wasn't a more inopportune time for a perfect God to indwell this world, but he chose to make it Kairos (fullness of time), to be born, and thus, beginning the tough work of restoring broken relationship with GOD.

Christmas challenges the church to reflect on the imponderable question, why did God choose to enter history as a homeless child? He was born in a manger because his loving parents, although returning to the city of their ancestors where both had roots - relatives or friends we assume could have taken them in, yet the nativity narrative shows otherwise. The answer is that Jesus wanted to demonstrate a virtue needed for salvation-humility.

We remember the homeless in our company, the orphans and widows, we remember the poor all over the world with whom the baby Jesus identifies in solidarity. We remember refugees fully aware that soon after his birth Jesus became a refugee in Egypt, fleeing King Herod's edict to kill all children less than two years. We remember our dedicated and selfless military families who are spending this Christmas without family members who were killed in combat, and those serving in

combat and non-combat zones. Please say a prayer for those who are less fortunate, and wherever possible reach out and lend a helping hand. This is what Jesus would expect of us.

The light of the world is here for all to see, worship and embrace. In the comforting words of the angels to the shepherds, "Do not be afraid; for see I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people: to you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord...".

A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to our beloved episcopal family in the Diocese of Easton, and all people everywhere.

Peace, joy & love!

+San & Lynn

Christmas 2018



Rector's Christmas Message

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

Collect for Christmas Eve, BCP 212

Beloved:

The dominant symbol for Christmas is that of Light.

The world was full of darkness, we were a people stumbling around in our blindness. We were slaves of those powers of darkness, of sin, violence, and death. Our world deserved only judgement and to be handed over to the powers of our own destruction.

And yet, He Who is Light itself, rather than handing us over to our own despair, turned to our world and loved us. He Who is Light sent His Light into the world and adopted us as His own. He sent His Light into the world and the forces of darkness, of sin, violence, and death, were vanquished into the shadows of this world. He sent His Light into the world and dwelt among us, sharing with us the brilliance of His light, and by the Light being Emmanuel, God with us, the wretchedness of human life was transformed and elevated.

The Light was handed onto us to share with each other and we became the sisters and brothers of the Light, and the children of Him Who is Light itself. We no longer are slaves to our own blindness, but now, as children of the Light, we sing the glory of the Light that has come into this World, and in the brilliance of His Light, has transformed the brokenness of this world into a Kingdom where the Light will abide no shadows.

For this reason, we celebrate Christmas with lights. We string lights on our Christmas trees and on our houses. We place candles in our windows and prepare for Christmas with an advent wreath with candles. All around us, as the days are getting shorter, the nights are getting longer, the air has a chill, and we tend to be more shut inside our homes, light and warmth abound.

In our waning days of Adventide, I invite each member of the congregation to consider where the shadows in each of our lives and our community need to be redeemed by the coming of the Light. Where in our congregational life or in our families and relationships ought we to invite the Light? What redemptions and reconciliations could be brought to bear if we have the courage to welcome the Light into our lives and drive out our shadows?

We welcome the One Who is Light itself into our world. We need not fear the judgement of this Light. As our world's brokenness and shadows have already been vanquished. Instead, we bask in the warm glow of the Light That has come into the world, and we long for the Kingdom that the Light establishes, wherein we find our true citizenship.

Warmest Christmas wishes you all. Godspeed all

travelers! May your families and friends bask in the warmth and glow of love!

Yours,

Matthew+



Blue Christmas Service & Pot-Luck Dinner

This will be a time when we can, with others, acknowledge the "blue" feelings we have at Christmas time, the reasons for them, and offer them to God. This time has been called the "long dark night of the soul" and "the winter of our discontent" in which memories of past experiences and the pain of present experiences can become overwhelming. For some, Christmas Day is the most difficult. For others, it may be Christmas Eve, or New Years Eve, or the beginning of another lonely New Year.

In this service, we'll have some singing appropriate to the season, recognizing that this is not a season of joy for everyone. We will invite you to reflect on the pain, the loneliness, and the sadness you may feel and offer it to God for healing and transformation. We pray that you will find hope and comfort in knowing that you are not alone. Always remember that God knows your pain and loves you unconditionally.



We will be "Greening" St. Paul's by-the-Sea for Christmas this Sunday morning, December 23rd after the 10 am service. Please plan to join us. Many hands makes light work.



Monday, December 24 5 pm
Christmas Eve Family Service
Rite II with Music

Tuesday, December 25 9 am
Christmas Day Service
Rite I without Music

Sunday, December 30 9 am
Carols & Lessons Service
One service only. No Eucharist.
Followed by a Parish Breakfast in DeWees Hall



Nothing Other Than Eating & Loving

Dear Friends,

The Noel Community is busy preparing for our 21st annual Christmas dinner. With your support, we will provide a hot meal at St. Paul's by-the-Sea from 11:00 to 2:00 on Christmas Day to those in need of food or companionship.

The Noel Community will set-up tables in the parish hall for guests to come inside, sit down and enjoy companionship with others while sharing a hot dinner meal with an assortment of desserts and music. The Noel Community is an important part of Christmas for many who are homeless, unemployed, underemployed, shut-in, or alone during the holiday season.

In addition to the Christmas Eve Dinner, The Noel Community volunteers provide a lunch every Saturday and several weekdays during the year through Shepherd's Crook. We actively work with other local food pantries, shelters, and social service groups to identify what is most needed by the individuals and families they serve. Your donations are used by our volunteers to purchase and deliver these items. Tens of thousands of canned goods, dry goods, fruits, desserts, toiletries, clothing, paper products, cleaning supplies, baby products and other items are donated to the local community thanks to your generosity. The Noel Community is committed to providing an enjoyable and positive outreach environment for those we serve and those who serve.

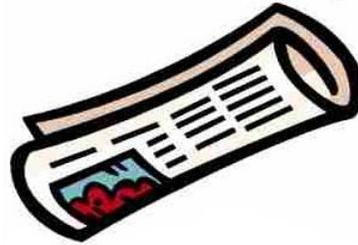
Checks made payable to The Noel Community can be mailed to:

The Noel Community
c/o St. Paul's by-the-Sea
302 North Baltimore Avenue
Ocean City, MD 21842

The Noel Community is 100% volunteers and we

appreciate your support over the past 20 years. All donations are tax deductible and are used in the local communities. We hope you will help us again this year. Thank you for considering our request. If you have questions, please call 410-289-3453.

Faithfully Yours,
Father Matthew D'Amario
Father Carl Mosley
Monica Martin



eNewsletter

All the committee chairs are invited to submit articles (whether one paragraph or several) about the activities of their committee such as meetings or upcoming events. The next issue will be sent out in mid-January.

We want to keep our parishioners well informed and feeling connected and your help is needed in order to do so. Thank you!

If you have any questions, articles, or suggestions for this e-newsletter, please contact Jody Farley at spbtsnewsletter@gmail.com Thanks for reading!

