

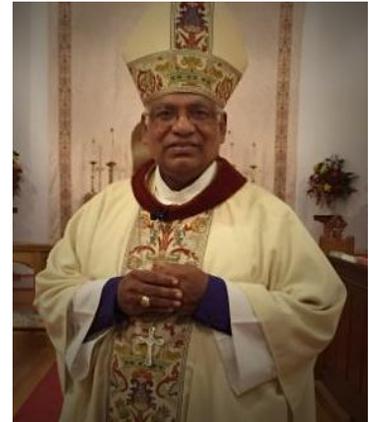
St. Paul's by-the-Sea

Weekly news & updates

December 4, 2020

Bishop's Advent Reflection

*Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”
(Luke 21: 28)*



The holy season of Advent has begun, and while the secular world around us trivializes the coming birth of our Savior with garish displays of commercialism, we Anglicans/Episcopalians have a time-honored tradition of taking Advent seriously. As we await the birth of hope, Episcopal preaching for Advent focuses on repentance or *metanoia*, spiritual vigilance and waiting with a purpose, the call to serve, moral propriety, self-emptying or *kenosis*, spiritual identity with God, and immaculate conception. This season also witnesses the observance of World AIDS Day on December 1. This is the 32nd year since World's AIDS Day was established. Have we forgotten where the world community stood with this global pandemic and the fear and uncertainty attached with it?

Many years ago, in one of the dioceses that I served, I was rector of a large inner-city parish of over 700 members where a small percentage of our worshiping community was diagnosed with HIV/AIDS virus. Some of those were victims of drug addiction or recovering drug addicts, others were teenage mothers and victims of abuse of one kind or another. As with the scenario associated with most troubled inner-city parishes the poverty level was very high and the ministry of the missional church invariably responded to what was transpiring in the community.

I got to know Donna very well through frequent pastoral visits. She and her entire family were long time members of the parish. Donna was a single young mother of four young children; one of them was a paraplegic. She was in advanced stages of HIV/AIDS and her condition required frequent hospitalization. One particular hospital visit was mid-morning and the open hospital ward where she was a patient happened to be extremely busy with medical staff doing their morning rounds. The lack of privacy wasn't conducive for pastoral counseling. However, in this brief moment even with all the distraction, I observed an unusual level of anxiety and restlessness in her demeanor. I had done enough hospital visitations to recognize that something beyond the usual was troubling her and concluded that under the circumstances it may be better to return at a more appropriate time. **[Read full Reflection here.](#)**

Advent Evening Prayer

at the Log Cabin

OFFICIATED BY THE REV. PENNY MORROW

December 4, 11 & 18 at 5pm
via Facebook Live



The Rev. Penny Morrow will officiate the first of three services entitled "Advent Evening Prayer at the Log Cabin," this evening, December 4, at 5:00 p.m. The service will be broadcast from her home via Facebook live on the St. Paul's by-the-Sea FB page, and will later be available on Facebook and on our website.

[Click here](#) to get a PDF of the service bulletin so you can follow along.

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook so you will receive notifications when we are live and when a post has been added. Click the Facebook icon below to visit our page.



Workshop with Consultant

The vestry and congregation members held their second workshop with our consultant Sandy Cormack on November 29. The group reviewed some of the outcomes from the first workshop of October 18 and discussed the impact of the meeting with Bishop Marray, Canon Patrick Collins and Father Michael Moyer on November 9. The Bishop determined that the parish was in a transitional period and not yet ready to call a new priest. The Bishop encouraged the vestry and leadership to work with Sandy to prepare us for our next clergy call.

The Red Doors Work Group gave a report of progress in establishing a new Mission Statement for the Red Doors. The next step will be to prepare a Strategic Vision for Red Doors and present both the Mission and Vision for the Red Doors to the vestry in the near future.

Sandy led the group in a review of the seven issues that created polarization and conflict

in the congregation from the past that were identified at the October workshop. The group re-ordered and prioritized the list in order to focus on those items deemed to be most crucial to the parish. The group agreed to meet again on December 13.



Online Videos

November 29 service

O Glorious Light

A beautiful Advent video made by Tom & Debbie Shuster featuring Shirley Hailey on the organ and vocals by Karen Bunting and Debbie Shuster.

Sunday, December 6, 2020

Morning Prayer Service

Lay Worship Leaders: Paul Rogers, Amy Rothermel, Tom & Debbie Shuster

Organist: Shirley Hailey

Lay Reader: Cami Rogers, Bob Rothermel

Altar Guild: Kay Ayres, Amanda Cropper

Counters: Amanda Cropper, Debbie Shuster

[Click here](#) for a PDF copy of the December 6 bulletin so you can follow along.

Book Club

This Sunday afternoon the St. Paul's by-the-Sea book club will hold their 2021 Organizational Meeting. The purpose of our book club is to:

- 1) Read a book
- 2) Discuss the book
- 3) Be in community & see each other

The goal for this meeting will be to plan the first few months of the new year (i.e. select the discussion leader, select the book, and select the day).

Please join the discussion and zoom in! Here is the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87801452135?pwd=NVAwTW9RWetZRFVtMoZ4NWQrZmZMQTo9>

Please pass the zoom link on to anyone you think might be interested in joining the group.



Christmas Poinsettias

We are now accepting orders for poinsettias or greenery to be placed in the church during Christmas. The cost of the poinsettias is \$10 per plant, however, all donations are welcome. To ensure that your dedication appears



Our Advent Peace Tree is in place beside the pulpit. Please help fill its branches with warm hats, mittens and scarves. Clothes pins are available under the tree. We will be collecting these items until December 20th. The proceeds will be donated to the NOEL Committee for distribution to those in need.

Hope4Recovery

The Ocean Cluster is having a paper drive to donate paper goods to the House for Christmas. We are asking that the congregation bring in paper goods such as toilet paper, napkins, paper plates, plastic utensils, etc. and these will be delivered to the House in December. Please bring your donations to church services on Sunday or drop them off to Don in the office before December 10.

We could also use help from the congregation in preparation of our part of the meal each month. Please contact Patricia Mulcahy at pgilsgirl@msn.com or call at 410-208-3864 if you are interested in joining in this outreach program.

in the Christmas bulletin, please submit your **order form** to the parish office by Thursday, December 14, 2020.

Memorial Brick Sale

Memorial bricks are again being offered for sale, through the end of the year. They are available in two sizes: 8x8 (\$500 each) and 4 x 8 (\$250 each) Wording is of your choice, and graphics are available.

If you are interested in ordering a brick to honor or remember a beloved one, **click here** to download a brick form. You can also contact Debbie Shuster at 410-213-9658 or ocshu@comcast.net, or the church office at 410-289-3453 or office@stpaulsbythesea.org, and we can forward the order form to you.

A special collection is being taken to purchase a brick to honor Shepherd's Crook and their dedication to the community. If you'd like to contribute please contact Debbie Shuster or the church office.



2021 Stewardship Campaign: Planting Seeds

Below is a transcript of the Stewardship testimony presented to the congregation on Sunday, November 29, 2020. If you have not yet sent in your pledge we encourage you to do so. If you need a pledge card mailed to you please call the church office. Contact Cheryl Nottingham, Finance Committee Chair at 410-713-2222 with any questions about Stewardship. Thank you for your support of our 2021 Stewardship Campaign.

Shepherd's Crook was dedicated in 2002. To this day a faithful group of volunteers are still serving the food insecure of Ocean City.

Four Board members lead a group of approximately 12 volunteers on Mon, Tues. Thurs. and Sat. from 10 am-12 pm every week. During the Pandemic, we have been open our regular hours. The number of people we have served this year has been less due to the pandemic, especially since the J1 students were unable to come this past summer, but those we have and are serving are very grateful we are there for them . Also, since the seasonal jobs have now ended, we are seeing more and more of our regular clientele.

It's always been said that Stewardship consists of Time, Talent and Treasure. If you don't have much Treasure to share but want to do more for SPBTS, consider volunteering for the Shepherd's Crook. We can always use volunteers in any way that you choose. Donations of food and money are also always appreciated. There is nothing more rewarding than helping your own community.

Covid Protocol Reminders

Everyone must enter through the orange doors on the north side of the FCCC building. Do not use the office door or the DeWees Hall doors.

Masks must be worn at all times.

Upon entering the building you will be asked for your signed covenant (**Covenant for Regathering**); you will sign the log book; and your temperature will be taken.

Only 3 people or a family will be allowed on the elevator at a time. You can also use the inside stairs.

After the service, you must exit the building using either the elevator or the steps just beyond the elevator that take you outside.

At no time, is mingling permitted inside the building.

[Click here to view the Parish Calendar](#)

