

# St. Paul's Episcopal Church

## THE GOOD NEWS December 2019

*The mission of St. Paul's is to be the Body of Christ  
and instruments of his love and grace committed  
to serve and nurture this church and community.*

*The Way of  
Love  
Turn  
Learn  
Pray  
Worship  
Bless  
Go  
Rest*

### Bethlehem Christmas Carol

*from the Rector's sabbatical*

By the time our little band of pilgrim/tourists found our way to the little town of Bethlehem, we were already nearly exhausted from the first seven days of our adventures in the Holy Land. We had, by that time gotten to know Jerry, our guide very well, and had come to trust his candor and humor. But when we had negotiated the narrow streets of Bethlehem as far as the souvenir shop that Jerry assured us was trustworthy and fair and had done our shopping, he handed us over to others to see the sights we had come there to see.

The reason, Jerry said, was that our guides *pro tem*, being residents of that town, were far more qualified than he to help us negotiate the various sites. I suspect the actual reasons had to do with the politics of Bethlehem being pretty much the biggest Palestinian controlled tourist site in the Holy Land, and the related economic reality of having an occupying government control when the lifeblood tourism will be allowed or shut down altogether.

In any case, we disembarked the comfortable and commodious coach we had by then called home for a week and were crammed into a pair of vans and were whisked away to the Church of the Nativity, the church built on a church built on a shrine built on the spot that early Christians identified as having been the place where the eternal Christ was born of Mary to live and die as one of us. The line was long, the entrance to the shrine was downright treacherous, and our time in the silver- and gold-encrusted shrine itself was cramped and hurried. It was worth every bit of it.

In spite of our guide's incessant prodding, it took our group a long while to quit the Church and return to our little vans, and with some paying less than needful attention to which van they had been assigned, a bit *longer* to make sure we had all been accounted for, before we were hustled to Shepherds' Field where, it has been said for more centuries than we can imagine, that the angels called to shepherds abiding with their flocks their good news of great joy at the coming of the Son of God.

As we looked out over the chain-link and barbed-wire frontier between the West Bank and Israel proper and waited our turn behind some other, equally harried group of tourist/pilgrims, we were asked to imagine the cold night and the angels' song, "Glory to God in the highest..." Then in an obvious and oddly scripted way, our guide encouraged us to sing our own Christmas carol. Someone in our group eventually started *O Little Town...* or *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear...* or *O Come All Ye Faithful...* Whichever it was, the whole scene seemed so manufactured to me that it failed to mean much to me.

But as we were hustled back through the city and began to board our own coach, I found that I was indeed humming a song to myself. I didn't write it down—it wasn't that kind of moment—but I *think* the song that was stuck in my head as we headed back up the back side of Mt. Scopus toward our final overlook of Jerusalem, is one I learned as a boy, one that has been a blessing many times over the years:

*Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
fill me with life anew,  
that I may love what thou dost love,  
and do what thou wouldst do.*

*Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
so shall I never die,  
but live with thee the perfect life  
of thine eternity.*

I have a hard time, most of the time, following my own admonition in this regard, but I'm pretty sure that if we would pause long enough in the frenetic, all-too-often frantic busy-ness of this season to remember that the Incarnation was part of God's plan, that Christ became one of us, so that we could become a part of his eternal kingdom, part of the divine life itself.

As we begin a new cycle of the Church Year, as we move from Advent to Christmas and beyond let remember to sing the Christmas carols with which the Breath of God has filled our hearts/

Peace and joy,

# Upcoming Events

**Sundays—8 a.m.**—Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 9 a.m. Choir Practice, 10 a.m. Choral Eucharist, Rite II, Children's Atrium. Coffee Hour following the service.

**Tuesdays—6 p.m.**—Saints, Sinners, and Cynics—Rookies

**Monday—December 2—8 a.m.**—Christmas on the River

**Wednesdays Dec. 4, Dec. 11, Dec. 18—12:10 p.m.**—Holy Eucharist with Anointing for Healing, 6 p.m. Potluck Supper and Program

**Friday—December 6—5 p.m.**—St. Nicholas Mass

**Saturday—December 7—Riverview School Pancake Breakfast, Parish Hall. 10 a.m. Christmas Parade**

**Sunday—December 8—4 p.m.**—Alice P. Taylor Concert, First United Methodist Church

**Friday—December 13—2 p.m.**—St. Ann's Guild Party at Henderson Manor

**Sunday—December 15—CCO Sunday—Canned Soups and Stews**

**Tuesday—December 17—5:30 p.m.**—Vestry Meeting, Bill Gentry's home

**Sunday—December 22—Decorating the church for Christmas**

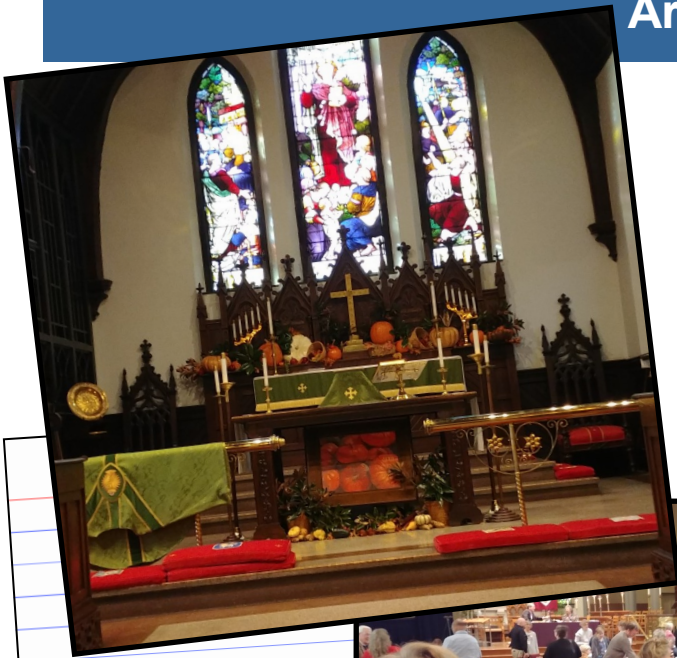
**Monday—December 23—10 a.m.**—Fr. Rich Film Festival

**Tuesday, December 24—5:30 p.m.** - Holy Eucharist 10:30 p.m. Midnight Christ Mass/reception follows

**Wednesday—December 25—9 a.m.**— Holy Eucharist with Blessing of toys

**Saturday—December 28—10 a.m.**—Prayer Shawl Ingathering, Parish Hall

## Around the Parish



St. Paul's harvest decorations always highlight our thanksgiving.



A well-fed crowd enjoyed the Parish Family Thanksgiving Feast the Sunday before the holiday!



St. Paul's Parish was well represented at the 192nd Convention of the Diocese of Kentucky in Louisville.

## Keep Awake!

from the Deacon

I decided to take a break from my usual writing of the Holy Land Travels because I believe that Advent is an important liturgical season for us to observe. Advent begins the Church's new year and our readings switch to year A. The first Sunday of Advent the Advent wreath will be set-up and someone will light the first candle, the candle for Hope.

Most Episcopalians do not need to be told to "keep awake" during Advent. Most of us are already operating in a state of sleep deprivation because we're too busy rushing around town or going to Evansville to get the best sale prices we can get. Plus, we're busy decorating the Christmas trees and wrapping gifts, planning the Christmas meals and who to invite to the many Christmas parties!

These days we are startled into extra hours of wakefulness in a liturgical season that annoyingly presumes we might be asleep! With all there is to get ready for the holidays, nobody needs to tell us to "keep awake!" As Advent progresses, the number of shopping days left before the big day offers a countdown that stresses us out and keeps us up way too late. But let me be clear that while the world's business may seem to be geared toward a commercialized Christmas, it seldom mentions or recognizes the importance of Christ's birth or His return.

But we have a loving God who forgives and understands. In Advent, we are indeed asleep to much of what matters, I fear. We as Christians are like people who have lived by the train tracks for years, who no longer hear the sound of the train. After years of attending Church, we have gotten use to the noise of Advent, to the coming of Christ, that we no longer notice it? Or if we do notice, it has ceased to jolt us awake because too many of us are still asleep in our beds on Sunday morning.

I urge you, keep awake don't miss the opportunity in the season of Advent that might have been most obvious and important at one time in your life, the coming of Christ. The return of the Advent season is full of delight and wonder as the purple color is used inside the sanctuary and the Advent Wreath appears! The four candles on the Advent wreath represent hope, peace, joy, and love. The center candle represents the light of Christ who has come into the world!

We should not let Advent slip away, only to realize that we spent it asleep! There is still time to encounter the presence of Christ in our waking hours. This Advent, Jesus is urging us to live as if His return were just around the corner! So, there is no time to nod off in the recliner or to be browsing on the web. We are to be attentive to the signs of His presence around us, because, indeed, He has already arrived. The story of Advent is the story of Emmanuel, "God with us!" Amen

Love and Peace!



## Advent at St. Paul's

- 6:00 pm Wednesdays – Potluck and Program
- 9 a.m. Monday, Dec. 2 – Christmas on the River
- 5:00 pm Friday, Dec. 6 – St. Nicholas Mass
- 8:00 am Saturday, Dec. 7 – Breakfast with Santa
- 10:00 am Saturday, Dec. 7 – Christmas Parade
- 4:00 pm Sunday, Dec. 8 – Alice P. Taylor Concert
- 2:00 pm Friday, Dec. 13 – Henderson Manor
- 5:30 pm Sunday, Dec. 15 – Tapestry Carols
- Sunday, Dec. 22 – Christmas Decoration
- 10 am Monday, Dec. 23 – Fr. Rich Film Fest

## Advent Wednesday Evenings

Arcane British colloquialisms aside, we've been having a good time so far with our Wednesday evening discussions of C.S. Lewis' deep but entertaining book on heaven and hell, *The Great Divorce*. We have decided, though, that rather than taking the planned break from Lewis for an Advent study, we will use the season to finish reading the book.

With that goal in mind, we will pick up with chapters 7-9 on Wednesday evening, December 4, chapters 10-12 on December 11, and the final two chapters on December 18, the Wednesday before Christmas.

Fr. Rich still has a couple copies of *The Great Divorce*, available for the asking. It really is a quick read, so it's still not too late to catch up and enjoy Lewis' fun dream of the chances we have to let go of what we *think* is important to hold onto what *really* matters for eternity. Bring a side dish or dessert to share at 6:00, or just join the conversation at 6:30.

## Snow Days Reminder

As we head into winter weather with one snow storm already behind us, please remember that, while Fr. Rich has declared that he will open the church for Sunday worship regardless of the weather, he fervently hopes the whole Parish family makes safety their primary consideration in snow and ice. Additionally, remember that if the Henderson County School System cancels school, the Parish Office will be closed as well.

## Christmas at St. Paul's

- Christmas Eve—Monday, December 24**
- 5:30 p.m. – Holy Eucharist Rite II
- 10:30 p.m. – Musical and Choral Prelude
- 11:00 p.m. – Midnight Christ Mass (Rite II)
- Immediately following – Christmas Reception

- 9:00 a.m. Christmas Day**
- Holy Eucharist Rite II and Blessing of the Toys



## Thank YOU from Our Youth

**Leslie Newman**—Thank YOU for responding to our several requests last month! Thank YOU for providing pumpkins and gourds for the beautiful Thanksgiving altar. The early freeze was our nemesis; it also created memories of sight, smell and touch and of disposing of pumpkins which didn't survive long enough for us to employ them.

And yes, you do see a painting in the mix. Iris' Gentry's beautiful pumpkin painting made a wonderful frontpiece for the Altar, and was the *perfect* complement to our bounty. Thanks to Iris for orchestrating us and to Kaleigh Purdy and Alex and Brady Francke for dedicating their Saturday morning to this project, and to Alexis, Miranda, Trae, Ty and Jeff for helping with cheese ball delivery and clean up.

## Christmas on the River

**Leslie Newman**—EYC delved into decorating boxes for gifts for the men and women who will be working on barges on Christmas. Fr. Baldrige reports many changes this year in the industry, and although new rules require smaller boxes, he assures us they will be more welcome and needed than ever before.

We have more boxes to decorate and we welcome YOU to stay after the 10 a.m. service with us on December 1 to help get the job done. YOUR presence is a way to share the gifts of generations with our YOUth. And, as the cheeseball makers will attest, we happily share good lunch!

Thanks to those of YOU who recycled Christmas cards for us to use in our project, and kudos to Jacob Martin for thinking to recycle Sunday bulletins as well, so we can include a picture of St. Paul's on our boxes and cards.

## Caroling and St. Nicholas

**Leslie Newman**—YOU still have time to let us know who might enjoy Christmas caroling from our YOUth. Our plan is to carol on Sunday, December 21 after the 10 a.m. service, and YOU are welcome to join our fun!

*Before* that though, YOU are welcome to join our youth, children and parish family to celebrate St. Nich-

## Calendars Are Here!

The 2020 EYC Calendars have arrived and they are as beautiful as ever. Get yours now for \$7 each (volume discounts available) and support our Youth programs.

olas Day (and the anniversary of Fr. Rich's ordination), on Friday, December 6 at 5 p.m. with a special, children-centric Mass, and gingerbread house making, supper, and celebration afterwards.

Raiko kindly pre-assembles the houses each year, but she needs to know how many to make, so please RSVP to her, Rich or me. The more the merrier!

## We Know YOU Love a Parade

**Leslie Newman**—YOU are welcome to join our YOUth, Ms. Ella, Fr. Rich, and their intrepid band of Elves for the Downtown Henderson Christmas Parade on Saturday morning, December 7. YOU can ride on St. Paul's float, or join the Elves to walk beside it handing out candy.

If YOU are unable to be *in* the parade but still want to be *part* of it, YOU are welcome to contribute wrapped candy, or money to *buy* candy, to give away.

And if YOU are searching for a way to give during Christmas, YOU are welcome to contribute to EYC to shop for the child we are adopting from the Volunteer and Information Center. The YOUth chose this avenue to give this Christmas season and their excitement about helping another child (or children depending on YOUR contributions!) is contagious.



## Vestry Notes

At their meeting on November 26, postponed from November 17, St. Paul's Vestry:

- Received financial reports and discussed proper reporting of funds transferred to operational use from invested funds.
- Asked the Finance Committee to develop an Operating Budget for 2020, recognizing that we will once again rely on invested funds as income.
- Applauded FB live feed of our worship service and discussed expanding WiFi coverage in the church.
- Heard that we are waiting to hear from one more vendor before awarding the contract to repair the HVAC system in the Christian Ed wing.
- Discussed the upcoming Henderson Manor party and the Christmas on the River project, and encouraged others to be part of both efforts.
- Heard a pastoral report from Fr. Rich.
- Offered several names to be considered for nomination for election to one of the three three-year terms on the Vestry to serve through 2022.
- Set Sunday, January 12 as the date for the Annual Meeting of the Parish.

The next Vestry meeting will be at 5:30 December 17 at Bill Gentry's home.

## Vestry Nominations

Susie Watkins, Mike France and Ann Street are still taking suggestions for members of the Parish in good standing to fill three three-year terms on the Vestry. Just pass on the name of someone you think will represent the Parish well, and the Committee will do the work of contacting suggested nominees and will put together a slate for election by all those members of the Parish who are present at the Annual Meeting, scheduled for Sunday, January 12

## We All Love a Parade

The St. Paul's "Little Church" float has become a beloved part of Henderson's Christmas Parade, and Miss Ella's small team of elves will soon set to work getting our float ready for this year's outing, on the first Saturday of the month, this year December 7.

The Parade itself begins at 10, but if you'd like to be part of the large crew of elves that track the float along the parade route to *carefully* and *safely* distribute candy to the younger fans, join us at our staging area further up Main about 9:00. Either way, everyone is invited to the Walaskys for chili and hot chocolate to warm up after the parade.

## The Original St. Nicholas

Friday, December 6 is the Feast of St. Nicholas, so time for Fr. Rich's celebration of his ordination as a Priest with a special children's celebration of the Eucharist. Everyone is invited to the 5:00 service, but children are particularly invited to come be reminded how a very real person became a very real saint through acts of kindness, generosity and Christian love. There will even be a special treat from St. Nicholas.

The fun will continue with a St. Nicholas party after the Eucharist with Raiko Henderson again leading us in decorating gingerbread houses. Raiko is bringing plenty of edible decorations, but if you have favorites, you're welcome to bring your own as well.

## Fr. Rich Film Festival

This year, school winter break begins Monday, December 23, and we are again celebrating with the annual Fr. Rich Christmas Film Festival from 10:00 to 2:00.

The movies, the snacks, and the lunch will *definitely* be geared toward the children and youth of the Parish, but everyone is invited to join the fun. So we'll know how many to expect, please let Fr. Rich or the Parish Office know if your kids, or *you* would like to join in.

## Worship with St. Paul's Online

**Lydia Johnson**—If you can't make it to church on Sunday, you now have another option for experiencing the service. Just log onto St. Paul's Facebook page and watch live or any time that's convenient for you. The page address is [facebook.com/St.PaulsHenderson](https://facebook.com/St.PaulsHenderson).

A few minutes before the 10 a.m. service, you'll see a live link that you can click to watch. We'll have a microphone plugged up so you'll be able to hear well, but you may also want to have a pair of ear buds handy to enhance audio. You also might want to have your Book of Common Prayer handy to follow along. We'll try to post the readings before the service begins so you can follow that as well.

If you watch, leave a comment so we'll know who's watching. And if you have any tips to improve the broadcast, leave those too—it's a work in progress!

## Christmas Memorials

If you'd like to place a poinsettia at the Altar during the Christmas season contact Judy at the Parish Office for more information.

## Financial Summary as of October 31, 2019

Pledged Income Received to Date	\$110,827
Unbudgeted Income from Investments to Date	\$40,000
Other Operating Income to Date	\$48,788
Operating Expenses to Date	\$212,033

## St. Paul's Episcopal Church Staff

The Very Rev. Rich Martindale, Rector  
The Rev. Richard Godbold, Priest Associate  
The Rev. Larry Courtney, Deacon  
Leslie Newman, EYC Director  
Judy Duncan, Parish Secretary  
Phone—270-826-2937

## Service Times

Sunday 8:00 Rite I  
10:00 Rite II  
Wednesday 12:10 Rite II w/ anointing for healing

## Vestry Members

Sr. Warden  
Jr. Warden  
Clerk  
Budget and Finance  
Parish Life  
Building and Grounds  
Outreach  
Worship and Music  
Christian Formation and Youth  
Communications  
Treasurer

Susie Watkins  
Mike France  
Becky Carroll  
Susie Watkins, Bill Gentry, Becky Carroll  
Marty White, Ann Street, Bill Brodsky  
Mike France, Bill Gentry  
Jesse Gonzalez, Becky Carroll, Lydia Johnson, Deacon Larry  
Mike France, Jesse Gonzalez  
Marty White, Bill Brodsky  
Ann Street, Lydia Johnson  
Hugh Hennessy

## St. Paul's Episcopal Church

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[www.stpauls-henderson.org](http://www.stpauls-henderson.org)

