



DECEMBER 2017

From St. Paul's Priest In Charge

Dear sisters & brothers at St. Paul's,

A new year is here! We begin the church year not with back to school programming but with the hushed anticipation of Advent waiting. We think we know what we're waiting for - a baby! - but anyone who has waited alongside an expectant mother knows that most of waiting is an experience of the raw edge of uncertainty.

How do you deal with uncertainty? Are you one of the control freaks of the world, planning every detail as if the sheer force of your preparation will ward off danger? Are you a magical thinker, trusting your positivity and prayers will make everything come out OK? Or are you some variety of fatalist, believing whatever happens, happens, and there's not much point in thinking about it? Most of us employ some mix of these three general strategies but no matter our personal style, we're all grappling with fear.

"The opposite of faith isn't doubt," a gentle monk told me early in my return to church, "it's fear." In the coming weeks we will hear wild stories of angelic visitors who will say again and again, "Be not afraid." Encounters with divine presence are naturally terrifying *precisely because* they are encounters with radical uncertainty. Suddenly, when God touches us, all the limits disappear. We can be new people, whose failings have no power to hold us back. But who are we without our small worlds, the little identities we make for ourselves like a pair of too-tight jeans? When God's reality pierces through our own small darkness, the enormity of new life threatens to undo us. If you think this is a bunch of mystic mumbo jumbo, ask - and then *really* listen - to someone in recovery tell you their story. Redemption first undoes us, then remakes us. It is pure joy for me to start to hear some of you begin to tell me your redemption stories. These patterns are laid out for us as we sing and pray our way through each liturgical year. It's God's constant invitation to us, and it means a deep dive into uncertainty.

“Apocalypse” comes from the Greek word that means “unveiling.” Jesus came into a time of a lot of prophesy - or at least worrying and writing - about an apocalypse, a great convulsion of creation that would usher in a new age and a new world. This new life would reveal the corruption of the powerful and the reality of God’s intended order for the world.

What is being revealed in your life this year? What are your fears? Where are you choosing lifeless certainty over God’s transforming, redeeming new life? In the midst of our preparations and the unbelievable number of charitable and fun traditions at St. Paul’s, my hope and prayer is that we will have some moments of reflecting and welcoming the awesome, if perhaps unnerving, presence of God.

May you be blessed with radical uncertainty,
-Marisa

Christmas Events and Service Schedule at St. Paul's



Saturday, December 16, most important pageant rehearsal from 9-11:30 a.m. Please let Alison Giuliano or one of the Church School teachers know if you are not able to attend. If you have a child who is 4 or older and have not been to church recently but would like to participate, please contact the church office.

Sunday, December 17, the regular 8 a.m. service, then our St. Paul’s Christmas Pageant at the 10 a.m. service. The Birthday of the Christ Child with the 2017 star ornaments following the 10 a.m. service, in the auditorium.

Sunday, December 24, Advent 4, one service at 9 a.m. (**NO Church School**), and Christmas Eve service at 7 p.m.

Sunday, December 25, Christmas Morning Prayer service at 9 a.m.

Sunday, December 31, return to regular service schedule at 8 and 10 a.m. (**NO Church School**)

Remember the Homeless this Christmas



The Giving Tree event gives us the opportunity to help some of the forgotten people in our community - homeless men. By purchasing the following gifts, we can help them have a better holiday and a healthier winter:

- * flannel shirts, sweatshirts, and sweaters-- (L, XL, XXL)
- * hats, gloves, and warm socks
- * toiletries (deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, combs, brushes, disposable razors, shaving cream)

Please bring your **unwrapped gifts** to the church by Sunday, December 10. On that day, during Coffee Hour, gifts will be wrapped and prepared for delivery to Providence Ministries for the Needy. Thank you for remembering our brothers this Christmas and may we all remember that when we reach out to others, we reach up to Him.

The Spirit of St. Paul's Committee

Church School Fundraiser

Thanks to Alison Giuliano and all who contributed in one way or another to the Election Day bake sale on Tuesday, November 7. The final tally was \$243.96 to benefit the children’s ministries. Well done!



Help for Veterans

Help Veterans while you shop for the holidays! When you shop on Amazon for the holidays, log on through smile.amazon.com. A screen will pop up with a new benefit. Amazon will make a donation to a charity at no cost to you.

Click *select a charity* and enter "Community Roots Neighborhood Services, Inc."

Click *enter*-- next page will show "Community Roots Neighborhood Services, Inc."

Click *select*-- It's that easy to help the Veterans Lunch Program and the veterans we are honored to serve.

Thanks for your generosity.

Gina Nelson, Director
Veterans Lunch Program
Community Roots Neighborhood Services, Inc.



Mark your Calendar

Please join us on Sunday,
December 31 for a special Coffee

Hour in honor of our organist and choir director, Seth Clark, as we say goodbye and thank him for his time and talents he's extended to St. Paul's and wish him well in his new venture. The reception will follow the 10 a.m. service in the auditorium. We hope to see you there.



Appalachian Winter

A Cantata for Christmas
by Joseph M. Martin

Dexter Gess invites you to a special presentation by the Southampton Community Chorus (of which he is a member) and the Southampton Children's Chorus on Sunday, December 10 at 4:00 p.m. at the First Congregational Church of Southampton, Rt. 10. Suggested donation is \$8.00.

Kate's Kitchen

Due at the church by
Thursday, December 21 @ 9 a.m.
for transport to Kate's



American Chop Suey*
(freezes well for make-ahead)

2 lb. ground beef
3/4 lb. elbow macaroni
2 lbs. canned stewed tomatoes
1 medium onion, chopped
1/2 cup chopped celery
2 Tbs. cooking oil
salt & pepper to taste

Cook the macaroni about 8 minutes and cool. Saute the celery and onion in the oil. Cook the ground beef, loosely, until the red color disappears. Combine all with the tomatoes, season to taste, and simmer until well-blended.

Place in a 9x13 pan, cover with waxed paper and aluminum foil for transportation.

**Disposable pans are available in the parish kitchen. This recipe is only a suggestion. If you have a special casserole of your own you would like to prepare, please feel free to do so. Thanks to all who participate in this important ministry.*

Ongoing . . .

- ✚ Morning Prayer, at 9 a.m. on Tuesdays in the parish library. All are welcome!
- ✚ Peanut Butter and Jelly sandwich making, Tuesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in the parish kitchen, to benefit the children who attend Kate's Kitchen in Holyoke.
- ✚ Veterans' Lunches, Thursdays at St. Paul's from noon to 1:30 p.m. Veterans and their immediate adult family members will be welcome.
- ✚ Church School, during the 10 a.m. service in the Church School rooms under the church, unless otherwise noted.
- ✚ Early Communion class takes place on the first Sunday of each month from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., Room 6 in the undercroft.
- ✚ Kate's Kitchen casseroles are due at St. Paul's by 9 a.m. the third Thursday of each month for transport to Hamilton Street. This month, Thursday, December 21. Copies of recipes are on the bulletin board in the auditorium but should you have a favorite of your own, please feel free to prepare it and share. Thank you for remembering those in need.
- ✚ The Vestry, our board of elected lay members, will meet this month on the third Tuesday, December 19, at 6 p.m. in the choir room.
- ✚ The Spirit of St. Paul's group meets on the last Tuesday of the month. **NO MEETING THIS MONTH (DECEMBER).**

December Birthdays & Anniversaries



- 4 Jackie (Maude) Martel
- 7 Marie Troppe
Bishop Douglas Fisher
- 9 Paul Dupont
- 10 Christine MacTavish
- 11 *Norman & Barbara Roy*
- 13 *Carl & Barbara LeGrand*
- 14 Barbara Harris, Xavier Sumner
- 15 Mason John Harris
- 17 Kristin Sroka, Abigail Provost,
Diane Bauer
- 18 *Julia & Richard Durchanek*
- 20 Mike Bineau
- 23 Matthew Giuliano
- 26 Cindy Valentine
- 28 Tito Ramos
- 30 *Collin & Jennifer Provost*
- 31 Deb Lucier, Bob Frye

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH

December 2017						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Altar Servers Reboot meeting 9a/church Early Communion Class 10:30a/Rm 6	4 AA 6:30p	5 Morning Prayer 9a/library PB&J 9:30a	6	7 Veterans' Lunch 12-1:30p auditorium AA 6p	8	9 Rental
10 Eucharistic Visitors meeting follows 8a service/library Giving Tree gifts wrapped following 10a service	11 AA 6:30p	12 Morning Prayer 9a/library PB&J 9:30a	13	14 Veterans' Lunch 12-1:30p auditorium AA 6p	15	16 Christmas Pageant rehearsal 9-11:30a/church
17 Christmas Pageant 10a/church followed by Birthday of the Christ Child	18 AA 6:30p	19 Morning Prayer 9a/library PB&J 9:30a Vestry mtg 6p	20	21 Veterans' Lunch 12-1:30p Auditorium Kate's Kitchen 9a AA 6p	22	23
24 One service @ 9a Christmas Eve service @ 7p NO Church School	25 Morning Prayer Service @ 9a AA 6:30p	26 Morning Prayer 9a/library PB&J 9:30a NO Spirit Grp mtg	27	28 Veterans' Lunch 12-1:30p auditorium AA 6p	29	30
31 Coffee Hour reception for Seth Clark follows 10a service/auditorium NO Church School	NOTE: St. Paul's Annual Meeting, Sunday, January 21, 2018					