

THE GOSPEL GAZETTE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND ST. BARNABAS CHAPEL
OUR MISSION IS TO KNOW, LIVE, AND SHARE THE GOOD NEWS STORIES OF JESUS CHRIST.



CHRIS'S CORNER

A WORD FROM OUR DEACON.....

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Blessings in the name of the Christ child who is coming into the world! In the season of Advent, we learn to slow down and wait. We join with our forebears in faith in ages past who yearned and waited for the coming Messiah. What a strange time to be told to "slow down and wait!" In a fast-paced season marked by the rush of Christmas parties, last minute shopping, and constant busy-ness, our faith tells us to "slow down." In an era of fast food, Amazon's "next day shipping," we are called to calm our restless hearts and to wait patiently for the coming king. We as 21st century people are not accustomed to long waits. Yet even in such a fast moving world, we will wait on average: 43 days "on hold" on the phone, four months at red lights, and two years waiting in line!

The Advent season calls us to a different kind of waiting. We are

called not to wait impatiently or anxiously, but a calm and reverent waiting. Isaiah 40:31 tells us that, "those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint." Psalm 27:14 we hear, "Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord." This type of waiting is centered in prayer. As Jesus' disciples waited in Jerusalem, their whole lives were anchored in prayer (Acts 2:14). In the same way, we are called to practice this type of waiting and prayer in the season of Advent.

How will you "wait" this Advent season? I encourage you to make space in your lives for daily prayer and Scripture reading during this Advent time. Some possibilities include our Advent devotional series, *Advent for Everyone:*

A Journey with the Apostles by NT Wright. You can purchase a hard copy on Amazon for \$15.39 or a Kindle copy for \$5.99. We will continue to meet on Wednesdays at 5:30 pm at Panera, but you can also use this daily devotional if you are unable to attend. You can also check out the Advent calendar created by The Episcopal Church that contains daily devotional activities to deepen your Advent journey. Finally, we will continue our noonday prayer on Thursdays throughout Advent. Join us for a time of prayer and a light lunch. Wait, pray, and worship this Advent season, and we await the coming of the Christ child! I leave you with this beautiful Advent prayer:

Lord Jesus, Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas. We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear your voice

Rev. Christopher Scott
Clergy



each day. We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us. We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom. We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence. We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light. To you we say, 'Come Lord Jesus!' Amen.
-Henri J.M. Nouwen

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LAST MONTH'S EVENTS

ALL SAINTS DAY SERVICE AT CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH



Nancy Cotten lighting the candles for All Saints Day.



Candles were lit on All Saints Day to remember those who have passed.

BISHOP COWDEN'S VISITATION AND CONFIRMATION



Bishop Matthew Cowden presides over Holy Communion.



Cake in honor of those who were confirmed during the Bishop's visit.



"Bishop Sully" poses for camera alongside Bishop Matthew Cowden.



(L-R) Zeke Nelsons, Lyle Blake, Emery Sykes, Kinley Sykes, and Lucas Thompson-Moore received their confirmations and receptions during the Bishop's visit.



Bishop Matthew Cowden speaking at the Sunday service.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DECEMBER 10

Annual Parish Meeting
immediately following
the 10:00 AM service at
Christ Episcopal Church

*This will be a combined service for
Christ Episcopal Church and
St. Barnabas Chapel*

Compline - 5:30 PM at
St. Barnabas Chapel

DECEMBER 17

Christmas Caroling followed
by refreshments and Compline -
4:30 PM at St. Barnabas Chapel

DECEMBER 21

Deacon Christopher's ordination
at Christ Episcopal Church
at 6:00 PM

NO NOONDAY PRAYERS

DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve Eucharist - 5:30 PM
at St. Barnabas Chapel

DECEMBER 31

Lessons and Carols -
10:00 AM at
Christ Episcopal Church

Compline - 5:30 at
St. Barnabas Chapel

NOONDAY PRAYERS



Deacon Chris taking a selfie with all who attended
Noonday Prayer. (Backrow L-R)
Kitty Clovis, Laura Goff Davis, Bill Saviers, Karen
Tate, Kipp Martin, Larry Rosinsky,
Debbie Bergstrom



Sign for Noonday Prayer service outside
of the church.



Fellow members awaiting Noonday Prayer service.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>3 WORSHIP ADVENT 1</p> <p>Read Luke 21:25-36. How do the symbols of the Advent season help you understand the story of Jesus? Where do you see them in your worship today?</p>	<p>4 TURN</p> <p>Read Isaiah 58. How does this reading challenge you to think about feasts and festivals differently? How might this lesson change the way you celebrate or recognize this holy season?</p>	<p>5 LEARN</p> <p>Read Matthew 4:18-22. How do these verses from Matthew inspire you to read Scripture with new eyes? Try reading several different translations of this passage. See how the language might change your reading of it.</p>	<p>6 PRAY</p> <p>Pray along with the Collect for Advent 1, found on page 211 of The Book of Common Prayer. Set a timer for three minutes to sit in silence and hear what God might be saying back to you.</p>	<p>7 BLESS</p> <p>Call or write a letter to a family member with whom you would like to have a closer relationship. Make plans in the new year to chat on the phone or meet over Zoom or in person. Let them know how much you love them and look forward to knowing them better</p>	<p>8 GO</p> <p>Read or watch your local news. Ask God to open your heart and eyes to ways you can promote reconciliation and healing in your community.</p>	<p>9 REST</p> <p>Spend at least 45 minutes outside today, without doing yard work or fixing lights or redoing bows on the garland. Take some time to just sit outside and let the air wash over you, taking away the stress and worry of the moment. Read Psalm 100 before and after your outside time. See how this psalm may help you rest and recharge your spirit.</p>
<p>10 WORSHIP ADVENT 2</p> <p>Read Luke 3:1-6. How does the story of John the Baptist fill your heart with hope?</p>	<p>11 TURN</p> <p>Turn away from the busyness of the world right now. Turn your heart and mind toward giving thanks for this time of reflection, refreshment, and renewal.</p>	<p>12 LEARN</p> <p>Read Luke 1:45. Share your faith story with one new person this week. It can be someone you have known for a while who has not heard the faith part of your story.</p>	<p>13 PRAY</p> <p>Pray along with the Collect for Advent 2, found on page 211 of The Book of Common Prayer. As you are out and about for the rest of this week, notice the people you pass. Ask God to bless them in their lives and work. See how this changes the way you go about your week.</p>	<p>14 BLESS</p> <p>Spend a significant amount of time today discerning if there is a special blessing or gift you can share with your church, a local ministry, or with your community. Ask God to inspire and equip you with the fortitude and tools to make this gift something truly memorable and heartfelt.</p>	<p>15 GO</p> <p>Go out of your way to have a conversation with someone you might not normally visit with today. Ask God to open your heart to hear this person as God does</p>	<p>16 REST</p> <p>Put your phone on airplane mode and leave it in a dresser drawer for an hour or two. Whatever happens in that time, you can handle later. Give this time to yourself and Jesus, to rest and recharge for the week ahead.</p>
<p>17 WORSHIP ADVENT 3</p> <p>Imagine the faces you'd like to see at church – an all-star list of folks you want to worship with. This could be people you know from summer camp when you were a kid, people who might have already died, people you work with – all your favorites. Commit to pray for those folks this week. And make a commitment to ask one of your all-stars to come to church with you in the next month.</p>	<p>18 TURN</p> <p>Do you have amends or apologies or adjustments you need to make? Ask God to open your heart and mind to those opportunities for reconciliation and growth. Thank God for the gifts of mercy and love, and the courage to make the changes necessary. And then do your best, with God's help, to make those changes.</p>	<p>19 LEARN</p> <p>Read Luke 1:59-80. When Zechariah's speech returns, he praises God. If you lost the power to speak for nine months like Zechariah did, what would be your first word of praise? Share this with your family, friends, and on social media.</p>	<p>20 PRAY</p> <p>Pray along with the Collect for Advent 3, found on page 212 in The Book of Common Prayer. How will prayer guide you through the rest of the week? Set aside special time today to focus your intentions on stirring up peace and spreading joy.</p>	<p>21 BLESS</p> <p>We know that angels are God's special messengers to us, and that Gabriel spent intentional time with Mary, helping her to understand her part in God's story. Who has shared an important lesson or their presence with you this week? Thank them today with a call or note.</p>	<p>22 GO</p> <p>Go out into your neighborhood today. Where is God at work? Ask God to show you how you can celebrate that good work and name God's presence in your community.</p>	<p>23 REST</p> <p>Set aside 30 minutes to spend in silence with your best friend today. Sure, it may feel a little weird to be silent on the phone or while sitting next to each other on the couch or across the table. Just give it a try. Make sure to set aside time after your silence to pray for each other and to say thanks for the time of rest.</p>
SUNDAY						
<p>24 REST ADVENT 4</p> <p>The conventional wisdom is that new parents should rest when the baby is resting. Make sure you take some time out to rest with Baby Jesus – and marvel in the wonder of a fresh, new, clean, shiny, tiny, precious start. Take a nap and thank God for the gift of Jesus and for peace at Christmas.</p>						

2023
december

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3 1st Sunday of Advent 10:00 AM Liturgy... Presanctified Gifts 5:30 PM Liturgy... Presanctified Gifts 7:00 PM AA Meeting	4	5	6 10:00 AM Prayer Group 5:30 PM <u>Advent Bible</u> <u>Study at Panera</u> 7:30 PM Al-Anon	7 12:10 PM Noonday Prayers 10:30 AM Bible Study Group 7:00 PM AA Group	8	9
10 2nd Sunday of Advent 10:00 AM Liturgy... Presanctified Gifts 5:30 PM Liturgy... Presanctified Gifts 6:30 PM 2nd Sunday Supper 7:00 PM AA Meeting	11 6:00 PM Vestry	12 5:30 PM PEO	13 10:00 AM Prayer Group 5:30 PM <u>Advent Bible</u> <u>Study at Panera</u> 7:30 PM Al-Anon	14 12:10 PM Noonday Prayers 10:30 AM Bible Study Group 7:00 PM AA Group	15	16
17 3rd Sunday of Advent 10:00 AM Liturgy... Presanctified Gifts 5:30 PM Liturgy... Presanctified Gifts 7:00 PM AA Meeting	18	19	20 10:00 AM Prayer Group 5:30 PM <u>Advent Bible</u> <u>Study at Panera</u> 7:30 PM Al-Anon	21 10:30 AM Bible Study Group Chris's Ordination Service - 6:00 PM 7:00 PM AA Group	22	23
24 4th Sunday of Advent 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist 5:30 PM Christmas Eve Eucharist 7:00 PM AA Meeting	25 Christmas Day CEC office is closed. 	26	27 7:30 PM Al-Anon	28 7:00 PM AA Group	29	30
31 1st Sunday After Christmas 10:00 AM Lessons and Carols 5:30 PM Compline 7:00 PM AA Meeting	LEGEND CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH ST. BARNABAS CHAPEL <u>MEETING OUTSIDE OF CHURCH</u>					

Deacon Chris plans to work in the Bridgeport area on Tuesday mornings, either in the St. Barnabas office or out in the community.

DECEMBER 3RD

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

- [ISAIAH 64:1-9](#)
- [1 CORINTHIANS 1:3-9](#)
- [MARK 13:24-37](#)
- [PSALM 80:1-7, 16-18](#)

DECEMBER 10TH

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

- [ISAIAH 40:1-11](#)
- [2 PETER 3:8-15A](#)
- [MARK 1:1-8](#)
- [PSALM 85:1-2, 8-13](#)

DECEMBER 17TH

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

- [ISAIAH 61:1-4, 8-11](#)
- [1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-24](#)
- [JOHN 1:6-8, 19-28](#)
- [PSALM 126](#)

DECEMBER 24TH

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

- [2 SAMUEL 7:1-11, 16](#)
- [ROMANS 16:25-27](#)
- [LUKE 1:26-38](#)
- [PSALM 89:1-4, 19-26](#)

DECEMBER 31ST

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

- [ISAIAH 61:10-62:3](#)
- [GALATIANS 3:23-25; 4:4-7](#)
- [JOHN 1:1-18](#)
- [PSALM 147 OR 147:13-21](#)

Advent is a season of preparation and anticipation for the birth of Jesus Christ. It is a time to reflect on the hope, peace, joy, and love that Christ brings to the world. Here are some Advent prayers to add to your personal devotions during the Advent season:

Prayer for Hope: “Loving God, as we light the first Advent candle of hope, we ask for your presence to fill our hearts and homes. May the hope of Christ’s coming bring light to our darkness and renew our spirits. In Jesus’ name, we pray. **Amen.**”

Prayer for Peace: “God of peace, as we light the second Advent candle of peace, may your peace fill our hearts and our world. Help us to be peacemakers in our relationships and communities. In Jesus’ name, we pray. **Amen.**”

Prayer for Joy: “Gracious God, as we light the third Advent candle of joy, may the joy of your salvation fill us with gladness. Help us to share this joy with others, especially those in need. In Jesus’ name, we pray. **Amen.**”

Prayer for Love: “Heavenly Father, as we light the fourth Advent candle of love, may you love inspire us to love one another as you have loved us. Let your love guide our actions and words. In Jesus’ name, we pray. **Amen.**”

May these prayers help you prepare your heart and mind to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Have a blessed Advent season!

SUBMITTED BY NANCY COTTEN

COLLECTS AND SCRIPTURES FOR CHRISTMAS DAY

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

- [ISAIAH 9:2-7](#)
- [TITUS 2:11-14](#)
- [LUKE 2:1-14\(15-20\)](#)
- [PSALM 96](#)

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.**

- [ISAIAH 62:6-12](#)
- [TITUS 3:4-7](#)
- [LUKE 2:\(1-7\)8-20](#)
- [PSALM 97](#)

Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born [this day] of a pure virgin: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

- [ISAIAH 52:7-10](#)
- [HEBREWS 1:1-4,\(5-12\)](#)
- [JOHN 1:1-14](#)
- [PSALM 98](#)

TUESDAY NEWSDAY BY SANDY WEBB

"Shock and Awe" is not a good strategy for church communications.

Some church traditions have a custom of announcing staff transitions and other timely information during Sunday morning worship. I understand the logic: Everyone is together, and everyone gets the same information at the same time. But, there are more pastoral and effective ways to share breaking news.

Any surprise announcement will evoke a diverse set of responses: Some people will be disappointed by the news while others will be pleased by it. Some people will be anxious about the future while others will be excited about new adventures. Each person needs space to process her own emotions, and each needs an appropriate outlet for her emotions. Sunday morning worship offers neither.

I much prefer the "Tuesday Newsday" approach: Announce momentous news on a Tuesday, give people time to work through the shock, take counsel as they wish, and then re-gather as a community the following Sunday.

Here's the three-step process that we recently used to handle a "Tuesday Newsday" announcement in our parish:

1. Staff Meeting – When the parish staff gathered for its weekly meeting, I invited a member of our team to tell her colleagues that she was leaving to pursue another opportunity. Putting our faith in the trust of the team, we asked the staff to hold the information confidential until a public announcement was made.
2. Special Notices – After staff meeting, I sent an e-mail to the vestry letting them know in advance that a staff transition was about to be announced. At the same time, the departing staff member called a small list of the parishioners with whom she had worked most closely and who most needed to hear the information directly from her.
3. Public Announcement – I sent an e-mail to the congregation announcing the transition and the date of an upcoming farewell celebration for our departing colleague.

We were able to accomplish all three of these steps in about four hours. We intentionally limited the time in which members of the parish staff had to hold the confidential information, and we didn't ask anyone to hold the secret overnight.

As the week unfolded, a parade of parishioners filed in and out of the departing staff member's office. Each person shared words of appreciation and congratulations. Many more sent e-mails and text messages of encouragement.

By the time we gathered for Sunday worship – and, truthfully, even by the time we gathered for Wednesday supper – the shock had passed. We were able to support our friend, be sad about her departure, and begin anticipating what our next chapter would be.

This article has been excerpted from www.ecfvp.org.

SUBMITTED BY MARILYN BLAKE

ATTENTION ALL LOVELY COFFEE HOUR PEOPLE

If you enjoy Coffee Hour, please consider signing up for a Sunday! The sign-up sheet is on the refrigerator. "Store bought" cookies are wonderful! Some fruit or a cheese tray are nice, however, not required.

Thank you so much for offering to share.

SUBMITTED BY JODY MORSE

GOOD NEWS!

Beginning the 1st Sunday of January (7th), St. Barnabas services will start at 8:00AM.

SUBMITTED BY DEACON CHRIS

OUTREACH

First, let me thank all of the Parish for supporting the various projects sponsored by the Outreach Committee in 2023. The Parish operates on a bare bones budget and no money is available for outreach projects – through the budget. This means that the various projects this year were made possible by the generosity, giving and love from parishioners. Our latest project, gathering donations for needy veterans at the Louis A. Johnson Veterans Administration Hospital here in Clarksburg, was concluded this past month. We gathered much needed sweat pants, sweat shirts and toiletries for veterans along with \$420 for the fund that the VA uses to purchase needed supplies for veterans. One parishioner feels so strongly about this program that this person continues to contribute year-round. The Backpack Blessing Program continues to supply snacks to children in the Head Start program at the Glen Elk site and the Clarksburg site. We packed for 66 children at the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

-Outreach Committee -

SUBMITTED BY CHUCK CRITCHFIELD

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Family Game Night will be Dec 18 from 5-8p, all ages and skill levels. Bring favorite game or learn a new one that I will have available.
2. Cookie exchange: last date to sign up will be Dec 10th with the exchange after service on 17th. Number of cookies will depend on how many participate. Please let Kristi Reeves (reeveskm82@gmail.com / 724-991-1160) know if you would like to join in on the fun.

SUBMITTED BY KRISTI REEVES



LECTOR LIST FOR DECEMBER

12/3 - Jody Morse
 12/10 - Jenn Hertz
 12/17 - Chuck Critchfield
 12/24 - Bill Saviers
 12/31 - Marilyn Blake

DEACON CHRIS'

CONTACT INFORMATION

Deacon Chris would love to connect with you! If you ever need to reach out to him, call or text him at (304)646-9597 or email him at christo.scott@gmail.com

CHURCH E-MAIL LIST

Are you getting email correspondences from Christ Episcopal Church or St. Barnabas Chapel?

If you're not, we need your email address!

Please send us an email at christchurch1853@aol.com

OFFICE PHONE:

304-622-3694

OUR WEBSITE:

www.christchurchclarksburg.com

WV DIOCESE WEBSITE:

www.wvdiocese.org

Backpack Blessings

Week 1

Food to Church
 -Nov. 30- Shopper
 Pam Critchfield

-Dec. 3- Pack
 Delivery Driver
 -Dec. 7-
 Dick Clovis

Week 2

Food to Church
 -Dec. 7- Shopper
 Pam Critchfield

-Dec. 10- Pack
 Delivery Driver
 -Dec. 14-
 Beth Sickles

Week 3

Food to Church
 -Dec. 14- Shopper
 Beth Sickles

-Dec. 17- Pack
 Delivery Driver
 -Dec. 21-
 Beth Sickles

Week 4

Food to Church
 -Dec. 21- Shopper
 Beth Sickles

-Dec. 31- Pack
 Delivery Driver
 -Jan. 4-
 Beth Sickles

