



Episcopal Church of the Advent
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Dear Friends,

Summer has ended and our fall programs are once again underway at Advent. I hope you'll join us for Bible study, Sunday School, Episcopal Church 101, and more.

We have also begun our fall stewardship campaign. I hope you will feel motivated by it over the next few months. On Sunday mornings you will hear from the various committees of the church and what they do with your offerings. This year, we have created a Q&A brochure about our budget that includes pie charts of our income and expenses. We also have some short statements from your fellow parishioners about why they give to Advent that will be published for your consideration.

Tithing (10%) is the Biblical standard of giving for all Christians. The reference is from Leviticus 27:30: *All tithes from the land, whether the seed from the ground or the fruit from the tree are the Lord's; they are holy to the Lord.* Everything we have is a gift from God and we return 10% of that gift to God in order to show our thanks for what we have been given.

Today, we consider the tithe to also include the giving of our time and talent to our church. We have a diversity of needs here, from ministries on Sunday to things throughout the week. When everyone in the church shares the gifts they have, our church flourishes and is able to make a powerful difference both for our community and outside the walls of the church.

Our generosity to God in our tithe is blessed by God and comes back to us in many ways. Luke 38 tells us, *Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.* When we tithe, we are blessed in return.

This does not mean that if we give our 10%, God will make us millionaires. But it does mean that our generosity will help us by providing a wonderful church community with ministry and programs that help us grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Our donations also support the Diocese of New Jersey, which in turn supports the churches of the diocese with programs and ministries and reaches out to help people in need throughout the state.

We have a wonderful church and that church is a witness in Cape May, in New Jersey, and throughout the world. Truly, material wealth does not bring us happiness, but sharing what we have to help others can and does bring us happiness. Please join the vestry and me in pledging to support Advent.

Faithfully,
Alan+

ADVENT BOOK CLUB

The Advent Book Club will meet on Tuesday, October 22, 2024, at 7:00 PM at the home of Lorraine and Jack Shaw. We will be discussing the book, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain. All are welcome. For more information please call Lynda Cogswell at 609-884-6675.

-Lynda Cogswell

FAMILY PROMISE

Church of the Advent will again join Cape May Methodist Church to host Family Promise in November. We are asked to provide the meal for Monday, November 11, 2024, for the family of three we have served in the past.. As in the past, the meal should consist of an entree and dessert...a salad is always welcomed as well. Please consider signing up for all or part of the meal that needs to be delivered to the Day Center at 505 Town Bank Road in North Cape May. It should be delivered between 11:00AM and 3:00 PM on Monday. Items should be provided in disposable containers and please be aware that there is a microwave for reheating but no oven at the Day Center. There is a sign-up sheet on the back table - please provide your phone number.

Donations for breakfast items as well as money for weekend pizza are always welcomed. A list of favorite food items and suggestions will be attached to the sign-up sheet. Please consider supporting this worthy ministry.

Marty Torpey (802-238-0545)

ECW NOTES

The ECW is sponsoring its annual pecan sale. Pre orders are required, payment is due upon delivery which we expect by Thanksgiving. Priester's one-pound bag of fancy pecan halves is \$15.00. To reserve your pecans please call Glenda Unzelmann at 443-243-7615. Priester's popular pecans are also a good gift.

Crafts Meetings are on Mondays at 4:00 PM in the Parish Hall. We are making things to sell at the Christmas Bazaar. If you do needlework or crafts at home, please think of donating some of your work to the bazaar. We want to make this bazaar even better than last year's. Please bring scissors. No experience necessary.

Our next meeting is October 17 at 10:30 in the Parish House and will center on our activities from now until the New Year. We will also start planning a project for February.

-Carol Obligado

ADVENT COMMUNITY PANCAKE BREAKFASTS

Over the past summer, ECM, assisted by our ECW friends, held four very successful Advent Community Pancake Breakfasts. With the help of our wonderful Advent volunteers, we served over 180 guests, and raised over \$1900 for our church.

Our team of volunteers did a great job promoting the events, staffing the kitchen and dining room, and making each guest feel welcome. People came to eat their pancakes and sausage, of course, but also stayed to enjoy the company of their fellow diners, and learn more about our Advent community.

Thanks again to our all volunteers who helped make this a success.

-Peter Van Syckle, ECM

October Birthday Celebrations

October Anniversary Celebrations

2	Amy DePietro	2	David & Kristen Craig
2	Melissa Maahs	5	Bob & Trisha Andrzejczak
4	Julie Shaub	7	Joel Rutenberg & Gini Tate
5	Robert Horn		
7	Brenda Williams Grubisic		
8	Barbara Hall		
11	Zeke Craig		
11	Nancy Kirtland		
13	Amanda Pierce		
16	Gail Markley		
26	Kathryn Brown		
26	Robert Bullington		
29	Jordon Brownstein		

WEEKLY WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday: The Holy Eucharist at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

The 10:30 service is also livestreamed on YouTube

Wednesday: Morning Prayer at 9:30 a.m.

Thursday: The Holy Eucharist at 12:00 Noon



ECW CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

DECEMBER 7, from 10:00 AM to 2:30 PM

Perhaps you are thinking it is a little early to talk about ECW's biggest fund-raiser of the year, but it is never too early to put things aside to donate to the bazaar and to volunteer to help set up, sell, clean up. So, here are a few reminders of who to contact to volunteer.

SOUP-TO-GO: Joel Rutenberg will be in charge with help from Gini Tate and Alison Brown.

CRAFTS, HAND MADES and PLANTS: Kathe Christensen. Karla Keifer will help in the morning. More help is needed here.

RAFFLE BASKETS: Sharon Werth with help from Barbara Vigliotti

JEWELRY: Karann Murphy and Regina Dougherty-McCarren

CHRISTMAS PAST: Richard Hudson

GREENS: Glenda Unzelmann NOTE: Glenda would like pre-orders for wreaths and table arrangements.

BAKED GOODS: Barbara Smith and Joy Wadleigh

COLLECTABLES, GRANDMA'S ATTIC: Lynda Cogswell with help from Susie Reckord and Jo Ann Price

More volunteers are needed. You can talk to the Table Chairmen or to Carol Obligado (609-972-1820 or cobligado@aol.com) We cannot do this without you!
Thanks, ECW

STEWARDSHIP 2025: GRACE

Grace is the theme for Church of the Advent's Stewardship Campaign. As Paul wrote to the early Church, Grace comes from God met with deep gratitude, and to be kept must be extended to others. Here at Advent we celebrate the Grace God has given us and share this with you.

The Grace of God shines in many ways at Advent. A few examples are:

- Our beautiful, well-maintained, historic Sanctuary located in the center of historic Cape May
- The several young families and new members who have joined our Church family since the end of COVID
- The Sunday School and Vacation Bible School Programs
- Our dedicated worship leaders, altar guild, ushers, and live-stream operators
- Our Outreach Program to help those in need in the community
- Our top-notch music program
- Our outreach to the Community by letting groups use our space for concerts, programs, and services
- The fellowship we enjoy through our programs and fund-raising events by the ECW and ECM



You are a part of our community of prayer and service at Church of the Advent. As you ponder how God is calling you, consider your gratitude for his freely given Grace by making a financial pledge to support our ministry in 2025. Your pledge allows us to plan and maintain our programs and services for the next year. We are grateful for the time, treasure, and talent you give to our church community. God bless you.

Joyfully yours,
The Rector, Wardens, Vestry and Stewardship Committee

PLEDGING Q & A

Does all the money go in gratitude for God's Grace?

Yes! We take seriously that we are Christ's Body here in Cape May. Jesus promised that when we serve the vulnerable and care for one another we are actually caring for Jesus. Everything we do, we do to serve God's people. Every time the choir sings, or the Sunday school students learn a new Bible story, or our Rector and Pastoral Care Team visit a parishioner, or the Altar Guild buys silver polish for the communion vessels, we know that we are serving the Holy Spirit who is among us. So, we do promise, every cent you give is for God's Grace.

Doesn't the Church get funding from outside sources, like the Diocese or charitable foundations? What about our endowment?

No. The ministry of our parish is funded almost entirely by our members' pledges and contributions. Without the generosity of our members and visitors who support us, we could not provide public worship, provide pastoral care, support outreach initiatives or care for our buildings. In fact, Advent gives a pledge to the Diocese of New Jersey to support the work of the Bishop and to assist mission parishes throughout the Diocese in much poorer ministries. Your pledge supports both the Advent Community as well as other communities that need help. We live simply, share what we have and give thanks every day for the people who continue to generously support us.

When do you need my pledge card back? Does it come in the mail?

You can pledge online (www.capemayadvent.org), e-mail your pledge to the Church Secretary (adventsecretary@comcast.net), or return your pledge card to the Church Office or put it in the offering plate. The sooner we receive your pledge commitment, the sooner we can plan our budget for the coming year.

So, if I send in my pledge, do you need the payment today?

No! Your pledge lets us know what you plan to give so we can plan our ministry for the coming year. You can fulfill your pledge on whatever timetable works best for you. You can choose to pay today. We are not looking for your entire pledge today, however, just your commitment for the year.

Do you really need help from all members?

Yes, we do! Some of us are fortunate to be comfortable financially. Some of us barely get by. And most of us are somewhere in between. Our goal is a pledge from every member, because we who pledge have come to know great joy in giving our resources to support this parish and God's creative work! Each gift represents the faithfulness of a member who shares our belief that we are called to be generous and invited to share. We need every pledge to continue to do the work God has given us to do.

I like to give money in the offering plate, instead of pledging. Isn't that the same thing?

First of all thank you! Offering plate donations make up a moderate portion of our annual budget, and we are grateful for that. Pledging helps us plan wisely, however. The Vestry meets at the end of the year to determine what our expenses and income will be for the next year. Your pledges represent the plans that our members have for helping us in the coming year. We provide weekly envelopes if you would like so that you can place your offering in the plate each week.

Can I pay electronically?

Absolutely! Our website offers the ability to make pledges and payments on a secure platform. Visit www.capemayadvent.org.

What is the outlook for our finances in 2025?

Advent must count on a guaranteed income stream from pledges each year to meet our Church Family expenses. Virtually all our expenses are fixed, including salaries and benefits, building maintenance, repairs, utilities, our pledge to the Diocese of NJ, office

expenses, and interest on our line of credit with Sturdy Bank. Less than 1 percent of our expenses are variable covering things like coffee hour and other parish functions.

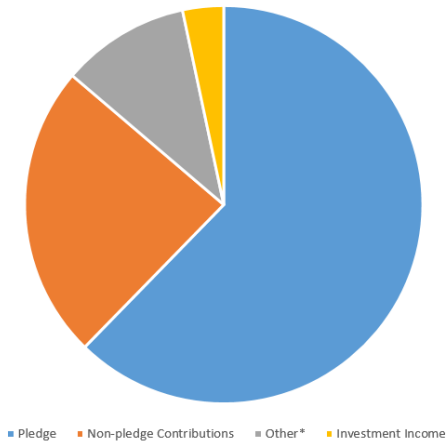
Most of us volunteer time and resources toward our Advent ministries -- outreach, pastoral care, altar guild, worship, music, finance and administration, fellowship, stewardship, Christian education, evangelism, scholarships, property, and security. Without this volunteer support, Advent would not exist. We are also blessed that many of us support the ECW and ECM in their various fund-raising efforts. However, that fund-raising provides only 4 percent of the income needed to maintain our Church.

The majority (63 percent) of our income comes from pledges to the Church. The remainder comes mainly from non-pledged contributions (24 percent), with a small amount from use of our facilities by outside groups and fund-raisers (10 percent), and investment income (3 percent). Our Advent Church Family counts on pledges to pay our bills. Other financial contributions are very welcome, but it is difficult for our Vestry to count on these to pay for our staff and maintain our beautiful Sanctuary and Parish Hall.

In recent years, our fixed expenses have exceeded our income by roughly \$20,000 annually. The COVID pandemic certainly did not help. However, COVID is now behind us. Some of our beloved parishioners have passed away or have moved to be closer to their adult children. We are very pleased to have newer members who have recently relocated to Cape May, and younger families with children who have returned to attend our services and Sunday School. Advent is alive and well and poised to be an ever-increasing presence to do God's work in Cape May.

2024 ANNUAL BUDGET

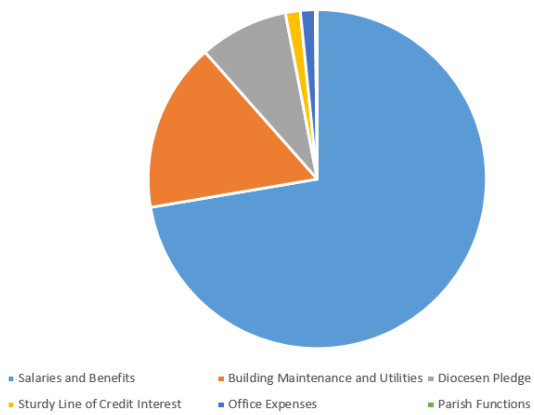
Annual Budget - Income



Income	Annual Budget
Pledge	158,956
Non-pledge Contributions	61,044
Other*	26,615
Investment Income	8,500
	<u>255,115</u>

*ECW and ECM fundraisers, Use of Facilities, etc.

Annual Budget - Expenses



Expenses	Annual Budget
Salaries and Benefits	198,340
Building Maintenance and Utilities	44,250
Diocesan Pledge	23,328
Sturdy Line of Credit Interest	3,900
Office Expenses	3,900
Parish Functions	500
	<u>274,218</u>