



Loaves & Fishes

DECEMBER 2025

Advent at St. Andrew's

the left-hand column

✠ As the old year winds down and we begin a new church year, this seems a good time to reflect on how much has been accomplished over the last twelve months, and to appreciate the work and workers because the miracle that is St. Andrew's nevertheless does require a lot of work.

✠ Yard sales this year have been hugely successful, and the selling part isn't terribly demanding, but organizing them, bringing it all in, arranging it on tables in the hall, and storing or disposing of the left-overs is a huge undertaking. Cooking and selling the lunches requires planning and work in the kitchen. Can you help with any of this? An hour or two on Wednesday evening or Saturday afternoon, could make a lot of difference to Steve and his team.

✠ The Thrift Shop also stayed busy whenever it was open. But the volume of donations is sometimes overwhelming. Louise could use a few more helpers for sorting.

✠ The luncheon ladies work very hard, and do a magnificent job, but cleaning up is a chore after all the prep, cooking and serving. There are so many small but important things that go into making these successes. We've just come out of stewardship season, but perhaps all of us could revisit the "time" and "talent" part of "time, talent and treasure."

Teach us to pray.

This was the plea of the disciples to Jesus and, if we have been paying attention to our inner lives, it is something we ask all the time. Whether we do it with the benefit of a director or on our own, a prayer life is the beginning of our life with God, something that we all cultivate. At the beginning of a new year, at a time when the world around us is busy trying to have us buy into (literally and figuratively) the Event that will occur at the end of December, our job is simply to get ready, to prepare our selves, souls and bodies for the Word of God becoming flesh. But this year of all years, we need to be able to put aside the demands of the world, at least for a while, and give at least a little of ourselves to this task of waiting and preparing.

We are offering a program that, hopefully, places few demands on our time and will give us a chance to open ourselves to the arrival of the very real, impossible gift that God is giving us. I hope you can participate in at least one of these activities.

Mark+

Advent Quiet Day
9:30 a.m.-Noon,
Saturday, December 6

Using different prayer methods (*Lectio Divina*, *Examen* and centering prayer), all of them ancient in origin, we will explore several of the texts of this season, both from the daily office and the



Eucharistic readings for Sundays. Praying the scriptures is a wonderful way to begin a dialog with God; the hope is that a dialog something that we can carry through the rest of the the season of expectancy, when we will be readying our minds and souls for the unexpected. There will be plenty of breaks built into our time and it will all happen in a relaxed atmosphere. Join us for all or part of this time together; I believe you will find it time well-spent.

Bible Study

Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m.

We will have Bible study focused on the readings for the following Sunday. It is a good way to make the lessons for the week more meaningful while learning something about this time in our church year and the biblical events that surround it. Join us if you can.

Advent Wreath Making

After the service on the first Sunday of Advent (during our award-winning coffee hour)

We will gather on November 30 to make Advent wreaths. The practice of making wreaths to mark the weeks of Advent is an old one. Please join us—RSVP Gizelle Moran to make sure we have plenty of supplies.

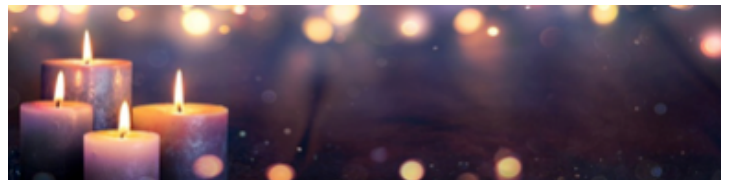
***Longest Night Service***

7:00 p.m. December 21

It is a truism that this season and the one that follows often cannot bear the emotional weight we place on it. Many of us have experienced losses that we have been too preoccupied to notice, much less acknowledge and mourn. The result is feelings of ambivalence about this time of the year, when many of us feel forced into joy amid these unresolved spaces in our lives.

The service of the Longest Night, occurring on the winter solstice, is less about recognizing a particular event in our biblical story than acknowledging what the year has meant, and looking into the coming longer days with hope, something we all need to embrace and bring to the world. Please join us for this liturgy, new to St. Andrew's this year.

While it is far from our goal to overwhelm people with yet more things to do this time of year, we hope that these opportunities can offer a time of renewal and focus to our deeply counter-cultural mindset and practices leading to Christmas. Be as frugal or as profligate with your time as you like. We offer these events as time for restoration and reflection in a season that asks far too much of us, and hope that the season will feel holier or the time we are able to give to it.

***The Senior Warden Looks Back—
And Ahead***

In the past month there have been many things happening here at St. Andrew's.

- *Silent Auction
- *Meeting with the council from Beth Israel Synagogue
- *Regional meeting at St. Paul's Piney
- *Bishop's visit and reception

*Several luncheons for local organizations

All of these events were successful in their various ways, and thanks are due to many in the parish who worked hard to bring them about. It is always great to see how folks in the parish come together to accomplish a goal. And the fellowship shared at the events is one of the best parts.

Special mention should be made of our gathering with the folks from Beth Israel Synagogue. They would like to establish a working relationship with our parish. The vestry met informally with members of the synagogue council. It was a wonderful time and we had some great conversations. They are making plans to hold a fundraiser here around Passover [which begins the evening of April 1 in 2026] and they will be working with us during our WARM week. They weren't able to take part in the November yard sale because they didn't have enough workers; but they would like to be present at future ones.

As I write, the November yard sale is about to begin, followed by our St. Andrew's Day celebration on Sunday. And the next Sunday marks the first Sunday in Advent, a busy time.

Susan Bennett



The Junior Warden Reviews a Successful Year

St. Andrew's closes out another successful year, thanks to wide support among our parish community.

This included a lot of work by the Holy Mowers—Ron Leonard, Robert Willey, Steve Carroll, Randy Gillies, Bill and Nancy Riddell, Stephen Stewart (one of our acolytes not so long ago, now Stewart Construction and Property Management), and Ethan Chan—gardeners Bill and Nancy Riddell (again!) and Barb Lorton; sidewalk power-washing team Jim Pendarvis and step-son Ryan of Grime Busters; and multiple snow removals by Stephen Stewart. And there was Trey Hansen's diligent vacuuming of the church before the

bishop's visit (during which he discovered and removed a brown recluse spider). And no doubt there are others of whom I am unaware. Together they have kept our campus beautiful and livable.

Restoration of the church's soffit and fascia has been completed. During repairs, however, extensive interior damage from termites and squirrels was discovered. (Pictures of the damage and repairs are posted in the parish hall.) Squirrel relocation is ongoing and will minimize further damage.

All that remains is raising the north-eastern section of the roof above the altar to allow room for replacing termite-damaged beams.

Looking forward, protecting the church from the elements requires two steps, including all nineteen windows, and repointing of surrounding bricks.

Replastering and painting the interior of the church will be the focus in 2027, with other projects for 2027 and beyond also in planning. We will be applying for grants to help with the cost of all our work.

We have read proof twice—two people, separately—of text for the window-donation plaque, and the plaque itself has been ordered. Expect to see it within a month.

Broken and Enduring Fables

I have been reading the poet Dante lately, especially his trip to heaven in the "Paradiso," the last volume of his three-part journey through the world of the damned and the saved. While I began it hoping to get a better idea of what a late medieval conception of salvation looked like, versus the ones we carry, I was intrigued by the saying of the Rev. Anne McConney, who reminds us that Dante gives us, "the place where all our fables are broken," that we are compelled to jettison all our broken fables when we are dealing with the appearance of an enfleshed Savior so that we can move into the reality of our faith lives as we actually experience them. Especially during a challenging year, we tend to look toward a misty-eyed Christ, gazing lovingly at children and healing the sick instead of the one who overturned money changers' tables, condemned hypocrisy and called for repentance, for a change of mind, from all of us.

If you are like me, especially at the end of a challenging year, we want the fable of the Jesus who has the sheen of all the good will we feel we need to place on him.

For several years, I worked at the Church of the Holy

Trinity in Center City Philadelphia, which had a chancel backed by a mural of the Nativity/ Epiphany scene, with the holy family in a stable, surrounded by men in odd clothes bearing gifts from the east. The single nod to contemporary lives was the briefcase that Joseph had set down by the manger, presumably so he could pick it up on the way back to the office.

It was an extended lesson in living with a fable year-round, even through the very hard lessons of Holy Week, where we could see the dissonance of a crucified God against the image of a family rejoicing at the birth of an entirely domesticated Savior, cooing under the indulgent smiles of family and adoring strangers.



We have been dealing with many broken fables this year and, however hard it has been, one that has been shattered is the idea that human dignity is something we can take for granted; we have learned, if you are like me, that it must be constantly practiced. We have recognized that there is something supremely important, even holy, in our humanity. I have been thinking of the Great Exchange, found in our collect for the Second Sunday after Christmas, which reads:

O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

It is a vision of God become human so that we might become divine. We have had to work hard lately to see each other's humanity, not to speak of divinity, but there is something holy in this effort.

The work of the church is fundamentally of restoration, and my prayer for this coming year is for the reconciliation of all peoples. It is possibly the moment we let go of our domesticated God, our broken fables, and look at the year ahead as one of opportunity to be the reconciling voice of the church in this world.

Mark+

As our Junior Warden has

written, we have benefitted from the dedicated work of many people this year, some contractors, but most, members of our church family. In addition to those he has mentioned, there are the sorters and sellers of the Thrift Shop, our hard-working luncheon ladies who served thirteen luncheons this year, in addition to mounting the Valentine's Day dinner, the ladies' spring tea and the silent auction.

Steve and his small, hardworking crew have mounted, carried on, and cleared away at least five yard sales during the year.

And let us not forget our dedicated Vestry, Altar Guild, coffee hour hosts, acolytes, lay readers and vergers.

Photographs by Peter Woodside



Photographs by Peter Woodside



Advent and Waiting

*Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but
still nothing is as shining as it should be
for you. Under the sink, for example, is an
uproar of mice – it is the season of their
many children. What shall I do? And under the eaves
and through the walls the squirrels
have gnawed their ragged entrances – but it is the season
when they need shelter, so what shall I do? And
the raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the cupboard
while the dog snores, the cat holds the pillow;
what shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling
in the yard and the fox who is staring boldly
up the path, to the door. And I still believe you will
come, Lord; you will, when I speak to the fox,
the sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-goose, know
that I am really speaking to you whenever I say,
as I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in.*
~Mary Oliver

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The poet Mary Oliver is doing what we all do at Advent. We wait and, being human, we wait in ways that are mundane. Her mice and foxes and squirrels are stand-ins for seeing the world in the small things, the things that we would be likely to ignore if they were not reminders that the whole world is waiting as we are. God comes in the most unassuming packages, and so we have to attune our hearts to the extraordinary arriving in ordinary packages.

So when Oliver asks (as we ask), “What shall I do?” it is in part to prepare ourselves while understanding that our primary task will be to be patient, knowing that God’s time is unlike our own. We are a people of doers; this is how we measure our worth, walking through our lives with lists of things to accomplish.

The reason Advent is such a holy time is that, at least in our inner lives, we are able to practice something that seems foreign to us, so foreign that we have to be reminded of it each year. It can feel like dead time. In fact, the world outside, with our jobs and the many demands on us, can make it feel like it is stolen or worthless. If we listen to “Christian” stations on the radio, we can feel like it is Christmas from about mid-November through the end of the year. Waiting is not what we are accustomed to and so we have to teach our selves and bodies to run at a slightly different rhythm. It is not

passive waiting we are about but waiting in anticipation about the new thing God is doing with us and around us.



One Saturday Morning in the Shop

We were busy on a recent Saturday morning with people in line to check out and more browsing about the shop. The lady at the counter was buying a beautiful blue winter jacket with stars all over. She said “I don’t know why I am buying this pretty girl’s jacket because I only have grandsons. I guess I will find someone for the jacket.”

Just then by her side appeared a young girl dressed in a sleeveless dress on this chilly Saturday morning. The woman said, “I found the person for the jacket.” She turned to the girl and her grandfather and asked if she needed a winter jacket. The grandfather said she did indeed need a jacket. The girl put it in the crib they were getting. The woman was happy the jacket was going to someone who needed it—the perfect person. The girl and her grandfather thanked the woman for the jacket. Everyone in the shop was delighted to have had, in a way, a part in this generosity.

Later that morning a man, who was a new customer, asked if we took a credit card and when I said “No,” we discussed where the closest ATM was located. As he turned to leave another customer said, “I am paying for your things because the first time I came here, I didn’t realize it was cash only, and someone paid for my purchase.” She gave me the money. The surprised gentleman kept asking if he could send her the money through one of the cash apps. She didn’t want any money; she had been waiting for a chance to pay it forward. The man left that day with a smile.

These two incidents in one day sum up for me what the Thrift Shop is all about. The young girl and the man were both given something they needed by complete strangers. Stories like this happen in the shop often and are accepted as routine by us workers. God’s hand touches the lives of givers, receivers, and sellers each day in the Thrift Shop.

Joyce Austin

*If you have two shirts in your closet, one belongs to you
and the other to the man with no shirt.*

~~Ambrose of Milan

December 7 Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 11:1-10 Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Romans 15:4-13 Matthew 3:1-12

8:00 a.m.

Lector: Jerry Gehrig

Altar duty: Lynn Duff and Margaret Hallau

10:30 a.m.

Verger: Nancy Edwards Lector: Margaret Hallau

Acolytes: Amelia Moran, Chris Moran, Lucas Anisko

Coffee hour: Mary Maker

December 14 Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 35:1-10 Psalm 146:4-9 or Canticle 15

James 5:7-10 Matthew 11:2-1

8:00 a.m.

Lector: Mary Larson

Altar duty: Susan Bennett and Kim Stickney

10:30 a.m.

Verger: Kim Stickney Lector: Robert Abell

Coffee hour: Austin family

December 21 Fourth Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 7:10-16 Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-25

8:00 a.m.

Lector: Ron Leonard

Altar duty: Kim Stickney and Mary Hansen

10:30 a.m.

Verger: Mary Maker Lector: Margaret Hallau

Acolytes: Alice Dunn, Barrow Dunn, Tom Joyner

December 24 Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96

Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14(15-20)

5:00 p.m.

Christas pageant

Altar duty: Mary Maker

10:00 p.m.

Verger: Lector:

December 28 First Sunday After Christmas

Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Psalm 147 or 147:13-21

Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7 John 1:1-18

8:00 a.m.

Lector: Mary Maker

Altar duty: Mary Maker and Michael Dyson

10:30 a.m. Service of Lessons and Carols

Verger: Susan Bennett Lector: Readers

Coffee Hour: Margaret Hallau and Hal Pease

Please Hold in Your Prayers

Patrick Afoakwah, Bobby Anderson, Pam Baake, Melanie Baisley, Jan Barnes, Eunice Benson, Elizabeth Biddle [Pumphrey], the Blackwell family, Caroline Bradford, Carol Brimm, Pete and Nancy Brown, Christine Butler, Misty Cantu, Susan Carroll, Art Carson, Donna Carter, Donnie Carter, Judy Cavin, Jennifer Cerialle, Brendan Chan, Judy Consoli, Lanette Cowles, Erica Day, Judi Donnelly, Billy Doughty, Phyllis Doughty, Karol Dyson, Ruby Dyson, Dean G., Brian Gardner, Paula Gardner, Susan Geary, Gloria Gehrig, Alexi Greene, Mary Hansen and the Hansen family, Ryker Hurst, Greta, Helen Kundacik, Kelly, Richard Lamb, Terrie Leonard, Thomas Leonard, Elinor Mattingly, Dee McRae, Artie Miller, Bob and Doreen Misener, Betty Lou Nagel, Bernice Nunes, Kenda Parker, Kyle Patrick, Skylar Patron, Natalie Reed, Tanya Robinson, Jane Roderick, Mark Stutso, Jonathan Tanner, Taylor, Tegan, Isabella Tenczar, Charlene Townsend, Paula Wayland, Angelica Wilkinson, the Willet family, Stuart A. Wood, first responders, and all who serve in the military and their families.. families.



Anniversary happiness to

22 Jon and Pam Baake

24 Tom & Jan Barnes

Happy Christmas, Happy Birthday

2 Becky Edwards

4 Shannon Hargreaves

9 Zachary R. Brigham

11 Eric McKenna

12 Win Everett

13 John McGee, Mildred Rivers

14 Steve Carroll, Sarah Duff

18 Lisa Saunders

20 Beth Eaton, Kai Drury

21 Natalie Hetmanski

22 Joe Saunders

24 Mary Drury

25 Jessie Kilcoyne

27 Jean Torgerson

30 Nancy Edwards

31 Jeana Johnson



***Never discount the rebound effect of expressing
gratitude — no matter how late.***

~~Ron Charles

December

- 1 Monday
 2 Tuesday
 3 Wednesday
 9:00 a.m.—noon Thrift Shop
 12:30 p.m. Healing Service
 1:00 Bible Study
 4 Thursday
 9:00 a.m.—noon Thrift Shop
 6:00 p.m. AA
 6:30 p.m. AlAnon
 5 Friday
 6:00 p.m. AA
 6 Saturday
 9:00 a.m.—noon Thrift Shop
 9:30 a.m.-noon Advent Quiet Day
 7 Sunday
 8:00 a.m. H.E. I
 9:15 a.m. Adult Forum
 10:30 a.m. H.E. II
 10:30 a.m. Sunday School
 8 Monday
 9 Tuesday
 Noon Retired Teachers' Luncheon
 10 Wednesday
 9:00 a.m.—noon Thrift Shop
 12:30 p.m. Healing Service
 1:00 Bible Study
 11 Thursday
 9:00 a.m.—noon Thrift Shop
 6:00 p.m. AA
 6:30 p.m. AlAnon
 12 Friday
 6:00 p.m. AA
 13 Saturday
 9:00 a.m.—noon Thrift Shop
 14 Sunday Hanukkah begins
 8:00 a.m. H.E. I
 9:15 a.m. Adult Forum
 10:30 a.m. H.E. II
 10:30 a.m. Sunday School
 15 Monday
 16 Tuesday
 17 Wednesday
 9:00 a.m.—noon Thrift Shop
 12:30 p.m. Healing Service
 1:00 Bible Study

- 18 Thursday
 9:00 a.m.—noon Thrift Shop
 6:00 p.m. AA
 6:30 p.m. AlAnon
 19 Friday
 6:00 p.m. AA
 20 Saturday
 9:00 a.m.—noon Thrift Shop
 21 Sunday
 8:00 a.m. H.E. I
 9:15 a.m. Adult Forum
 10:30 a.m. H.E. II
 10:30 a.m. Sunday School
 7:00 p.m. Longest night service
 22 Monday
 23 Tuesday
 24 Wednesday Christmas Eve
 5:00 p.m. H.E. II with Christmas Pageant
 10:00 p.m. H.E. II
 6:00 p.m. AA
 6:30 p.m. AlAnon
 25 Thursday Christmas
 26 Friday
 6:00 p.m. AA
 27 Saturday
 28 Sunday
 8:00 a.m. H.E. I
 9:15 a.m. Adult Forum
 10:30 a.m. H.E. II
 10:30 a.m. Sunday School
 29 Monday
 30 Tuesday
 31 Wednesday



When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with their flocks, then the work of Christmas begins: To find the lost, to heal those broken in spirit, to feed the hungry, to release the oppressed, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among all peoples, to make a little music with the heart. And to radiate the Light of Christ, every day, in every way, in all that we do and all that we say. Then the work of Christmas begins.

~~Howard Thurman

Looking for Someone?

Rector: The Rev. Mark Smith: 301 862-2247 rector@standrewsleonardtowntown.org

Parish Administrator: Amanda Anisko: 301 862-2247 parishadmin@standrewsleonardtowntown.org

Senior Warden: Susan Bennett:

Junior Warden: Peter Woodside:

Robert Abell:

Joyce Austin:

Bobbi Brown:

Ethan Chan:

Nancy Riddell:

Clara Stark:

Andy Walls:

Treasurer: Chuck Stein:

609 658-4545 amy.consoli@gmail.com

Newsletter, Dee McRae:

To give flowers for the altar: 301 862-2247 parishadmin@standrewsleonardtowntown.org

The Right Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde 202 537-6550

The Diocese of Washington 202 537-6555 <http://www.edow.org/>



Food for Thought

Theologian Howard Thurman was deeply influenced by Ghandi's philosophy of nonviolence; his 1949 book, Jesus and the Disinherited deeply influenced Martin Luther King and other civil rights leaders.

Thurman sees love not sentimentally but as a discipline of respect for the personhood of the other. This respect allows space for understanding to grow, whereas hatred shuts down all such possibility.

It is clear, then, that for the weak, hatred seems to serve a creative purpose. . . . Jesus understood this. What must have passed through his mind when he observed the contemptuous disregard for the Jews by the Romans, whose power had closed in on Israel? . . . In the face of the obvious facts of his environment he counseled against hatred, and his word is, "Love your enemies." . . .

Despite all the positive psychological attributes of hatred we have outlined, hatred destroys finally the core of the life of the hater. While it lasts, burning in white heat, its effect seems positive and dynamic. But at last it turns to ash, for it guarantees a final isolation from one's fellows. It blinds the individual to all values of worth, even as they apply to himself and to his fellows. Hatred bears deadly and bitter fruit. It is blind and nondiscriminating. True, it begins by exercising specific discrimination. . . . But once hatred is released it cannot be confined to the offenders alone. It is difficult for hatred to be informed as to objects when it gets under way. . . . Hatred cannot be controlled once it is set in motion. . . .

The logic of the development of hatred is death to the spirit and disintegration of ethical and moral values.

Above and beyond all else it must be borne in mind that hatred tends to dry up the springs of creative thought in the life of the hater, so that his resourcefulness becomes completely focused on the negative aspects of his environment. . . .

Jesus rejected hatred because he saw that hatred meant death to the mind, death to the spirit, death to communion with his Father. He affirmed life; and hatred was the great denial. To him it was clear.

Jesus and the Disinherited, Howard Thurman, Abington Press, 1949, Beacon Press, 1996.