



The St. David's Epistle

St. David's Episcopal Church • 905 E. McMurray Rd., Venetia, PA 16367 • 724-941-4060
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Merry Christmas

It has been a wonderful fall here at St. David's and I look forward to celebrating Christmas with you all. It is my pleasure to wish you a happy Advent and a very Merry Christmas.

We have a lot to celebrate this year. We have welcomed many visitors and newcomers and as of this writing our membership is over 200. As you can see in the stewardship report (p. 2), we had a very successful and encouraging stewardship season and are continuing to grow in giving and service.

I am encouraged by all the good things happening here and the joy of being a part of it. It is easy for me to get caught up in it, but I need to be careful because the goal is not a wonderful St. David's. The goal is the Kingdom of God and never is this more tangible than in our celebration of the Incarnation of God in Jesus on Christmas.

Christmas is when we commemorate God becoming one of us. He wasn't born to a family of wealth or high

standing, but to a poor couple from a backwater town. He was born into a messy world just like ours and the news of his day wasn't so different from ours. There was violence and terrorism, intense political and religious divides, and a refugee crisis of which he was a part.

Our story as Christians is more than a tale we tell each year. It is one of being known and understood by a God who created us and loves us, even to the point of suffering and death. "Jesus, our Emmanuel," as the popular carol goes, literally means "God with us."

Whatever your experience of Christmas, whether a joyful celebration, a difficult reminder of loss, or anything in between, please know that God loves you and is with you. He is there in the joy and the pain and knows deeply the experience of both. Your family and friends at St. David's are here for you this Christmas and always. Come worship and be loved. Come hear our story, your story, of life

and resurrection. Come and receive the bread and the wine, the body and the blood and know that you will always have a home.

Kris +

Year End Gifts

If you are planning on a Christmas or year end gift to St. David's, all donations need to be postmarked by Dec. 31 to be included in your 2015 giving. As always, we are so thankful for any and all contributions you make to the life and mission of St. David's.

If you would like a statement of your giving, please contact the church office by Wednesday, Dec. 23.

If you would like to set up automatic payments for next year, please contact the church office.

Parish Announcements

Christmas Cookies - We are looking for people to bake cookies to set out after the Christmas Eve services. If you would be willing to do so, please bring them with you to church on Christmas Eve.

Christmas Services - Christmas services will be held on Christmas Eve, December 24th. There will be a Family Service with Pageant at 3:30pm, Special Music at 7:00 pm, followed by our Traditional Candlelit Service at 7:30 pm.

Office Closed - The parish office will be closed December 24th through January 1st.

Trinity Institute - In January, St. Paul's will be hosting a conference called "Listen for a Change" and will focus on racial justice. A featured speakers will be the Rt. Rev. Michael Curry, the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church.

Important Dates

1/21-1/23 - Trinity Institute

1/31 - Annual Meeting

Following worship at
11:30 am

2/10 - Ash Wednesday

12:00 pm - Prayers &
Ashes

7:00 pm - Eucharist
with
Imposition of
ashes

Children's Corner

Watching and waiting. This is the season of Advent- the **Hope** of the coming Christ as foretold by the prophets, the **Joy** of the Holy Family who would bare God's son, the **Good News** received by the lowly Shepherds in the field, and the Gifts brought by the Magi that remind us of **God's Gift to Us**- God with us - Immanuel. All children are invited to celebrate with us Christmas Eve at the 3:30 service as we present the Christmas Pageant.



There are no lines to practice this year. The children will move through the Nativity story using the Godly Play Narrative. It's sure to be a beautiful and blessed event.

Parish Wellness

By: Kathy Carter RN, MSN



Achoo-Bless you!!

Well, it's here-sneezing, coughing, fever-Flu season has arrived. Thankfully, we are having a mild winter so far, but the incidence of flu isn't necessarily lessened by the mild weather. You may be wondering:

- Should I get a flu shot?
How can I prevent the flu?
and
- How can I tell the difference between the flu and a cold?

The CDC has a great information page that answers all of these questions in an easy to understand format (no medical jargon!) and can be accessed at the following web address: www.cdc.gov/flu/keyfacts.

In the meantime, here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Consider getting a flu shot-it's not too late
- Wash your hands frequently-if soap and water is not available, alcohol based hand cleansers work well

If you think you have the flu:

- contact your doctor; she may be able to prescribe an anti-viral medication to lessen the duration and /or severity of the flu
- stay home until 24 hours after your fever subsides (I know it's hard, but it really is better for you and everyone else!)

For more information check out the flu brochure that will be available in the narthex beginning this Sunday, and visit the CDC website listed above.

* A special note to parents: the CDC website has a wonderful brochure entitled "The Flu: A Guide for Parents."

Reference: CDC 2015

Parish Spotlight: Cochran Family



Welcome to the Cochrans, Luke, Michael, Caleb and Elizabeth (pictured left -right)! In a short time the Cochran family has become an integral part of the St. David's family. Stay tuned for the next newsletter to find out how they discovered St. Davids and what keeps them coming back. In the mean time, say hello and welcome to the Cochrans!

Stewardship Report

We had a very strong stewardship campaign this year. We had a total of 37 pledges come in and when we add the estimates for non-pledge gifts, the total expected giving for 2016 is \$98,364. This is up \$17,000 from our anticipated giving in 2015.

It was an encouraging year for stewardship. We had a few established families move away during the year and I was concerned we would have a hard time making up the difference. I did not expect we would increase by such a large amount. It is another example of God's faithfulness in the face of my unfaithfulness. Thank you for your generosity and for your part in the mission and life of St. David's.