

Spirit of St. Matthew's

DECEMBER 2019

ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

*All things
come of thee,
O Lord, and
of thine own,
have we
given thee*

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About Advent

Advent can come as a surprise to us sometimes, beginning right after the busy Thanksgiving holiday with family and friends. It's not unlike the surprise of Mary when she received news that she was pregnant with Jesus. Like her, we take the season of Advent as a time for pause, reflection, and preparation for the gift of God's love coming to us through the baby Jesus.



Much like a Lenten period of [fasting and sacrifice](#), the early Church urged Christians to dedicate this time to readying themselves for Christ. Their practices remind us that we are also called to be attentive to the message of repentance and the end times. This may seem unexpected considering the extravagant ways we eat, shop, celebrate, and rejoice as Christmas approaches!

Advent Traditions

The four weeks of Advent are popularly considered to symbolize the four thousand years of darkness before the coming of Christ. We set up [Nativity scenes](#), [light Advent candles](#), and [decorate wreaths](#) in our homes to signify Christ's presence coming in the darkness of sin and suffering. Four candles adorn an Advent wreath, one for each week.

Advent colors are worn by the priests and deacons and decorate the church. They are represented in the candles that surround the Advent wreath:

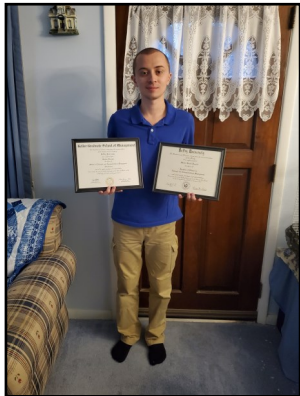
Violet: royalty, repentance, and fasting (First, Second, and Fourth Week)

Rose: abundant joy (Third Week of Advent,)

It is important to consider how we can grow in spiritual wholeness during such a busy commercial season. Take time for silence and reflection each day with Scripture, a [devotional prayer](#), or with an [Advent calendar](#). Dwell with the scene of the Nativity. What is it like to imagine the journey of Mary and Joseph and to be with them as the baby Jesus comes into the world? St. Ignatius of Loyola had a deep reverence for the Nativity scene, as we see in the [Spiritual Exercises](#). Consider praying with saints like him, with the Liturgy of the Hours, or with the [O Antiphons](#) the last week before Christmas. A prayerful journey with the Holy Family and the Church throughout Advent will lead to gifts of gratitude and joy when we enter the Christmas Season.

Parish News

Congratulations Shawn!

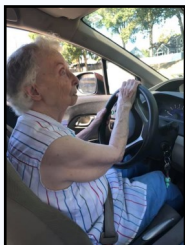


Pictured here is Shawn Herrick, holding his Bachelor's Degree and his Masters Degree completed with Distinction!

Both of these degrees were earned at DeVry University; Bachelor of Science in Network and Communications Management, and Master of Network and Communications Management with a concentration in information security, with a GPA of 3.92 which is an A.

Shawn is currently employed by the Borough of Paramus as IT (Information Technology) Desktop Support.

Congratulations Shawn! We are all very proud of your accomplishments!



Pssst. Don't look now. But Helen might be seen driving a new car soon!

ECW NEWS

The **ECW mitten** tree can be found in the church to collect mittens, gloves and scarves. These are donated to the YCS Holley Center in Hackensack, a home for children with special needs, and the shelter at St. Paul's in Paterson. Donations are gratefully accepted, as well as new unwrapped toys which can be placed in the box below the mitten tree.

The Annual Meeting takes place on January 19, and the ECW will conduct the **soup and bread sale**. Please make a quart or two of your favorite soup or a bread to help this fundraiser.

The Diocese of Newark has a **Book of Remembrance**, where those persons special to our congregation may be entered and will be remembered. This year the ECW will have Selene Von Bartheld and Barbra Lewis included in this special remembrance.

Thank you Helen Chubb for conducting the monthly ECW meetings and continuing their important work. All women in the congregation are welcome to join the brown bag lunches held on the first Wednesday of the month in the Hards room at noon. This is a long-standing ministry in the Episcopal church and the meetings are companionable and prayerful while doing God's work. Please join if you can.

Music Notes by Owen Davitt

As I settle into my new position at St. Matthew's I am eager to implement new ideas and music into our worship. I fell in love with the Episcopal church when I took on my first Minister of Music position in 2012. There is so much diversity in our liturgy, and as a people, we love to take on new things while at the same time holding onto our traditions. I have some short term and long term goals that I would like to share with you.

As you know, we are currently in the beginning stages of forming a choir. The choir at our church will be a ministry that will help to enhance the worship experience. The choir will be helping to lead the congregation in song. It is not about musical talent, but about a willingness to worship our Lord through music. All are welcome!

A long term goal that is already in the works is establishing a concert series at St. Matthews. Hosting concerts and other art-focused events will help to bring community awareness to the parish. Once established, this will be both financially and socially beneficial for us, as we will work towards welcoming attendees of these events to join us at mass. If we gain just two new parishioners a year from these events, I think that will be a tremendous accomplishment for the parish!

Thank you for your support! I am so happy to be your Minister of Music!



Concert Series Begins at St. Matthew's

The first in a series of concerts takes place on Saturday, December 7 at 7:00 pm. in the church at St. Matthew's.

Les Non Triolets, a trio consisting of flute, piano and double bass will be performing.

The artists, Stefanie Santoro on flute, Ian Howells on piano and Kara Delonas on Double Bass are all graduates of the John J. Cali School of Music at Montclair State University. They perform a wide variety of music from classical to jazz.

Mark your calendar and plan to attend this concert which promises to be quite an entertaining event!

Worry is a conversation you have with yourself about things you cannot change.

Prayer is a conversation you have with God about things He can change.

More Parish News

Welcome Baby Whitney, the new grand daughter of Judy and George O'Connell!

On the First Sunday of Advent, The Rev. Liz Golub will be our Celebrant and Preacher. Deacon Jacques Girard will continue to serve for the next three Sundays of Advent.

Our **Christmas luncheon** will take place on Sunday December 15. Turkeys will be roasted to make sandwiches, and we are invited to bring sides and desserts. Look for a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

The **Greening of the Church** will be on Sunday, Dec. 22 after worship. Please try to stay a few minutes to help make the church ready for Christmas.

Donations to the Altar Guild are welcome. Suggested donation for Christmas memorial flowers is \$25. Please submit names to the office by Dec. 21.

The **Christmas Eve service** takes place at 4:30 pm. Music will be provided by a string ensemble from Paramus High School along with our Minister of Music Owen Davitt at the organ, and the Celebrant and Preacher will be **The Rev. Richard Gressle**.

The **Christmas Day service** will be celebrated by Deacon Jacques at 10 am.

Our **Annual Meeting** will take place on Sunday, January 19. It is important that we attend this meeting so that we can plant for the year of 2020 to continue doing God's work. A luncheon follows the meeting. Sandwiches will be provided and we are invited to bring sides and desserts.



Birthday and Anniversary blessings for Linda and Skip Cherven, Linda LoPresti, Hunter and Jen Sternbach.



Blessing of the Animals on the Feast of St. Francis.



The Feast of Christ the King
Deacon Jacques, Joe Mamatz,
Jen Sternbach, Linda LoPresti
and Hunter Sternbach.



The new St. Matthew's Choir. All
interested voices are welcome.
First rehearsal will follow
worship on Sunday, December 1.

Schedule of Events

- } **Sunday, Dec 1 - First Sunday of Advent** - Holy Eucharist 10 am Celebrant and Preacher: Rev. Liz Golub
- } **Wed, Dec 4 - ECW Brown Bag Lunch** 12 Noon Hards Room
- } **Sunday, Dec 8 - Advent 2-** Holy Eucharist 10 am
- } **Wed., Dec 11 - St. Paul's Shelter Dinner,** Leave 5 pm
- } **Thurs. Dec 12 - Vestry Meeting** - All welcome
- } **Sunday, Dec 15 - Advent 3** - Holy Eucharist 10 am - Christmas Party/Luncheon
- } **Saturday Dec 21** - Deadline for submission of names for Christmas flowers
- } **Sunday, Dec 22 - Advent 4** - Holy Eucharist 10 am - Greening of the Church
- } **Tuesday, Dec 24 - Christmas Eve Service** - 4:30 pm Celebrant and Preacher: Rev. Richard Gressle
- } **Wed. Dec 25 - Christmas Day** - Holy Eucharist 10 am
- } **Sunday, Dec. 29 - First Sunday After Christmas** - Holy Eucharist 10 am
- } **Wed., Jan 1- New Year's Day** No ECW Brown Bag
- } **Sunday, Jan 5 - Celebration of the Epiphany** - Holy Eucharist 10 am
- } **Sunday, Jan 12 - Epiphany 1** - Holy Eucharist 10 am
- } **Sunday, Jan 19 - Epiphany 2** - Holy Eucharist 10 am - Annual Meeting and luncheon

St. Matthew's Fish and Chips Dinner October 20, 2019

Always a favorite, the Fish and Chips dinner was once again a great success! Thank you Cindy Hahn for organizing and always making it a great hit. The whole gang was there. Mark your calendars - the next Fish and Chips will be on Sunday, March 29, 2020.



Birthdays & Anniversaries

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

3~Evelyn Cheringal
 3~Andrew Godleski
 4~Amanda Kulesza
 16~Marcy Greenblatt
 18~Ed Coohill
 18~Richard Mark Evans
 18~Brandt Rohdieck
 19~Carolyn Mark
 20~Richard Knapp
 23~Kimberly Joosten
 26~Thayer Woodcock



George Hahn at the grill for our
 September St. Matthew's Day
 Celebration!

The Newsletter welcomes any contributions you wish to make. If you have a favorite prayer or saying, or some family news or pictures, please share it so that we may all celebrate with you.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1~Michael Paul Godleski
 3~Bruce Woodcock
 6~Judy Albro
 16~Brianna Greenblatt
 19~Tracy Joosten
 21~Patricia Lamendola
 22~Duncan Greenblatt
 23~Jason Scerbo
 26~Barbra Joosten
 31~Nick Baccala
 31~Shelly Parker

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

9~Rick & Nancy Newman

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

8~Jean Scerbo
 9~Jeff Lamendola
 11~Laura Joosten Pantelides
 18~Nancy Petrillo
 19~Clara Nagy
 20~Robert Chebba
 21~Ryan Coohill
 27~Ginny Marchut
 27 ~John Bono
 28~Richard Albro
 28~Mary Pinkerton

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

26~Robert & Karla Chebba

Phone: 201-262-5286

Fax: 201-262-5286

E-mail: stmatthewsparamus@verizon.net

<http://stmatthewsparamus.org>

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

WELCOMES YOU



We, the Congregation of St. Matthew's, seek to know the gifts that Christ has given us, to use them as Christ would have us, in a ministry of love and encouragement to each other and the community, with God's help.

Deacon: The Rev. Jacques Girard

Parish Administrator: Janice Walker

Webmaster: Shawn Herrick

Newsletter Editor: Linda LoPresti



St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
167 Spring Valley Rd.
Paramus, NJ 07652

Thanksgiving
Blessings