



THE TRUMPET



St. Michael's of the Valley...making an eternal difference in each other's lives and in the world

St. Michael's of the Valley Episcopal Church, PO Box 336, Ligonier, PA 15658

Phone: 724-238-9411 Church office hrs. Monday – Friday 9 AM until noon

December 2023/January 2024 Issue



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Though it's a cold, gray, snowy day here in Rector, a crackling fire is keeping the office warm. As the days grow shorter and colder I am thinking of our parishioners who have headed south for the winter, and missing them. Perhaps we could entice them to come back to a warm fire on a cold day in Rector, where they will be much loved!

Meanwhile, we are about to start a new church year this Sunday, and plans for our celebration of Christmas are underway. While it's quiet and peaceful outside in nature, St. Michael's is a hub of joyful activity.

In recent weeks parishioners have been happily bringing Christmas gifts for needy families, and committing to the ring the bells for the Salvation Army. We've been enjoying fellowship with coffee and refreshments during Sunday school and after church. The children and teachers of Wood Bridge are back after their Thanksgiving break, along with the light and cheerful sounds.

We begin our Advent study this Sunday, December 3rd at 9:15 a.m. in the parish hall. We will gather around the fire to take a fresh look at how we prepare our hearts and minds to receive Jesus Christ anew this Christmas. Though we may know the story all so well, we will take the opportunity to go deeper into its meaning for the world and the hope it provides to all who live in darkness. It is a book and video presentation entitled, "Prepare the Way for the Lord", written by Adam Hamilton, which can be purchased on Amazon and is available in a Kindle edition too.

In recent years St. Michael's has celebrated an Advent Lessons and Carols on the third Sunday of Advent. We will do this again this year on December 17th at 10:00 a.m. The whole of the Advent story, from the people who walked in darkness, to the prophecy of the coming of the Messiah, who would come to us through 'the stump of Jesse', announced by an angel to a virgin, to the birth of God on a cold night in the desert of Israel.

Please join us to sing 'Once in royal David's city, stood a lowly cattle shed', 'not in that poor lonely stable with the oxen standing round', 'O come, O come, Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel', 'Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel', 'from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee', 'born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king', and 'What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; if I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give him give my heart.'

The work of good leadership is ongoing, with the vestry preparing the 2024 budget and an upcoming vestry election in January. There is much going on behind the scenes to make sure we begin the new year on solid footing and hopeful expectations. I'm continuing to meet people and find my way around, and I'm so grateful for the welcome I've received.

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My husband Bruce has announced his last Sunday to both his parishes will be Christmas Eve. So, he'll be joining me here in Ligonier in January! Please pray for both his parishes, St. Anne's in New Martinsville, WV and Trinity in Moundsville, WV, that God will send them a new priest who love and serve them as Bruce has these past 12 years. Also, pray that Bruce may find a parish to serve here.

Faithfully,

Marjorie +

THE ORDER OF ST. LUKE

St. Michael's is blessed to have three members of the Order of St. Luke serving our parish, Dave and Peggy Vale and Ann Woodall. Their ministry is a continuation of the healing ministry entrusted to the disciples by Jesus. Dave, Peggy, and Ann have a calling from God to offer prayers, the laying on of hands, and anointing with holy oil consecrated by our bishop. All members of the Order of St. Luke receive extensive training to offer their ministry with dignity, confidentiality, sensitivity, and compassion.

Throughout his ministry Jesus is described as 'curing' as well as 'healing' people. So, it has become common to use these terms interchangeably, but there is a difference between the two. Interestingly, the first definition in Merriam-Webster's dictionary for the noun 'cure' is 'spiritual charge: care', followed by 'pastoral charge of a parish', *and only then* 'recovery or relief from a disease'. 'Spiritual care' is the primary meaning of 'cure', though we rarely use it that way today.

The first definition for the verb 'cure' is 'to restore to health, soundness, or normality.' The first definition of the verb 'heal' is 'to make sound or whole', then 'to restore to health.' 'Health' is defined as the condition of being sound in body, mind, or spirit.

I've recently re-read all of Jesus' healing miracles and the contexts in which they occurred. There are many more texts about 'healing' than 'curing'. The difference between the two seems to be that 'healing' is more concerned with wholeness, which has to do with the whole person, not just the body. What many of these healing miracles do is restore people to God, their family, and sometimes even to a community—as with lepers.

Some people may be looking for a cure for a specific ailment, but being broken by sin, all of us are in some need of healing, even if we look perfectly well. Life is not the way God intended it to be. Everything was broken by the sin of Adam, from Creation itself—as evidenced by natural disasters and pestilence, to human beings who harm one another and themselves, to the smallest cells in our bodies that sometimes go haywire, leading to sickness and even death. We are broken inside and out, and in our relationships with one another, Creation, and particularly in our relationship with God.

Jesus' encounters with the people he 'cures' are about much more than the removal of the disease or an impediment. They are more about a restoration to wholeness. In these texts there is a connection between healing, belief in God, and trust in Jesus. We learn this from the contexts of these miracles and what Jesus says during them. Numerous times Jesus tells the person, "Your faith has made you well."

We are aware of many people in our parish, and many of our friends and family, who are in some need of healing in their lives. We would like to help connect them with the healing presence of Jesus.

In addition to requests for their ongoing prayers, the members of the Order of St. Luke would like to invite you to receive their ministry for yourself or on behalf of loved ones. This ministry is offered on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. in the church, and we would also like to return to offering it during communion in the very back of the church. If you desire prayers for healing and the laying on of hand or anointing, please look for Dave, Peggy, or Ann after receiving communion at the 10:30 service. Your prayer requests will be handled discreetly, with confidentiality.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sunday, December 3, 2023 ~ First Sunday of Advent

First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Gospel: Matthew 13:24-37

Sunday, December 10, 2023 ~ Second Sunday of Advent

First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

Second Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

Sunday, December 17, 2023 ~ Third Sunday of Advent

First Reading: Genesis 3: 8-15, 17-19; Second Reading: Genesis 22:15-18

Third Reading: Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7; Fourth Reading: Isaiah 11: 1-3a, 4a, 6-9

Fifth Reading: Luke 1: 26-35, 38; Sixth Reading: Luke 2: 1, 3-7

Seventh Reading: Luke 2: 8-16; Eighth Reading: Matthew 2:1-12

Ninth Reading: John 1:1-14

Sunday, December 24, 2023 ~ Fourth Sunday of Advent

First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Sunday, December 24th ~ Christmas Eve

First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

Psalm 96

Second Reading: Titus 2:11-14

Gospel: Luke 2:1-14, 15-20

Sunday, December 31, 2023

First Reading: Isaiah 61:10—62:3

Psalm 147

Second Reading: Galatians 3:23-25, 4:4-7

Gospel: John 1:1-18

SCHEDULE OF DECEMBER SERVICES

December 3rd, 2023

8:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite I
10:30 am Holy Eucharist Rite II
Children's Offering
Adult Christian Education ~ 9:15 am
Coffee Hour after the 10:30 am service

December 17th, 2023

10:00 am Lessons & Carols Service
One combined service
Adult Christian Education after the service
Coffee Hour after the 10:00 am service

December 24th, 2023 ~ Christmas Eve

4 pm Holy Eucharist Rite II
9 pm Holy Eucharist Rite I

December 10th, 2023

8:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite I
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II
Adult Christian Education 9:15 am
Coffee Hour after 10:30 am service

December 24th, 2023 Sunday Morning

Fourth Sunday of Advent
One combined service ~ 9:00 am
Holy Eucharist Rite I
Adult Christian Education after the service

December 31st, 2023

8:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite I
10:30 am Holy Eucharist Rite II
No Christian Education
Coffee Hour after the 10:30 am service

SCHEDULE OF SERVERS FOR DECEMBER

Sunday, December 3rd ~ 8 AM

Lay Reader: Lisa Frederick
Usher: Joe Frederick

Sunday, December 10th ~ 8 AM

Lay Reader: Lisa Laskow
Usher: *still needed*

Sunday, December 17th ~ one combined service ~ 10 AM ~ Lessons & Carols

Lay Reader: Mary Walton Whittemore
Usher: Mick Pompelia

Sunday, December 24th ~ one combined service ~ 9 AM

Lay Reader: Bobbie Off
Usher: Carl Campbell

Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24th, 4 PM

Lay Reader: Mary Walton Whittemore
Usher: *still needed*

Sunday, December 31, 2024 ~ 8 AM

Lay Reader: *still needed*
Usher: *still needed*

Sunday, December 3rd ~ 10:30 AM

Lay Reader: Pilar Herr
Usher: Andy Herr

Sunday, December 10th ~ 10:30 AM

Lay Reader: Laura Fisher
Usher: Rex Ashbrook

Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24th, 9 PM

Lay Reader: *still needed*
Usher: *still needed*

Sunday, December 31, 2024 ~ 10:30 AM

Lay Reader: *still needed*
Usher: Carl Campbell

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR JANUARY

Sunday, January 7, 2024 ~ First Sunday after the Epiphany "The Baptism of our Lord"

First Reading: Genesis 1:1-5

Psalm 29

Second Reading: Acts 19:1-7

Gospel: Mark 1:4-11

Sunday, January 14, 2024 ~ Second Sunday after the Epiphany

First Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1-10, 11-20

Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Gospel: John 1:43-51

Sunday, January 21, 2024 ~ Third Sunday after the Epiphany

First Reading: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Psalm 62:6-14

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Gospel: Mark 1:14-20

Sunday, January 28, 2024 ~ Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Psalm 111

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR JANUARY

Sunday, January 7, 2024

8:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite I

10:30 am Holy Eucharist Rite II

Adult Christian Education 9:15 am

Children's Offering

Coffee Hour after the 10:30 am service

Sunday, January 21, 2024

9 am ~ one combined service ~ Holy Eucharist Rite II

Followed by Annual Meeting & catered brunch

No Adult Christian Education

Sunday, January 14, 2024

8:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite I

10:30 am Holy Eucharist Rite II

Adult Christian Education 9:15 am

Coffee Hour after the 10:30 am service

Sunday, January 28, 2024

8:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite I

10:30 am Holy Eucharist Rite II

Coffee Hour after the 10:30 am service

SCHEDULE OF SERVERS FOR JANUARY

Sunday, January 7, 2024 ~ 8 AM

Lay Reader: Lisa Frederick

Usher: Joe Frederick

Sunday, January 14, 2024 ~ 8 AM

Lay Reader: Bobbie Off

Usher: *still needed*

Sunday, January 7, 2024 ~ 10:30 AM

Lay Reader: Laura Fisher

Usher: Carl Campbell

Sunday, January 14, 2024 ~ 10:30 AM

Lay Reader: Laura Fisher

Usher: Carl Campbell

Sunday, January 21, 2024 ~ one combined service ~ 9 AM

Lay Reader: Pilar Herr

Usher: Andy Herr

Sunday, January 28, 2024 ~ 8 AM

Lay Reader: Mary Walton Whittemore

Usher: *still needed*

Sunday, January 28, 2024 ~ 10:30 AM

Lay Reader: Cindy Pompelia

Usher: Mick Pompelia

SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING SCHEDULE ~ DECEMBER 5th ~ 11 AM to 3 PM

11:00 AM – 11:30 AM – David Vale

11:30 AM – 12:00 noon – Peggy Vale

12:00 PM – 12:30 PM – Mary Walton

12:30 PM – 1:00 PM – Bobbie Off

1:00 PM – 1:30 PM – Cindy Pompelia

1:30 PM – 2:00 PM – Mick Pompelia

2:00 PM – 2:30 PM – *still needed*

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM – *still needed*



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA MEMORIALS

We will once again be having poinsettia memorials on the altar at St. Michael's during the Christmas Season. The cost of a memorial will be \$30.00. If you would like a poinsettia memorial in honor or memory of someone, please contact the church office or fill out the form that is being provided in the Sunday bulletins. Deadline is Thursday, December 14th.





ST. MICHAEL'S HOSTING RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

St. Michael's is hosting the American Red Cross Blood Drive on Thursday, December 21st in the Smith House from 12 noon until 5 PM. By appointment only call the Red Cross @ 1-800-733-2767 to set up an appointment.

NOTE FROM SR. WARDEN NANCY ROST

A very heartfelt thanks to all of you who have turned in your pledge cards for 2024 and to all who are fulfilling the 2023 pledges! While St. Michael's truly is our congregation, not our building, it takes financial support to run our church and outreach projects and we are grateful to all who make that possible.

ST. MICHAEL'S CEMETERY UPDATE

St. Michael's of the Valley Cemetery is a non-profit corporation administered separately from the church. It was founded in 1958 for the reverent burial of members of the parish and others in the community with the intent of retaining the simplicity and natural beauty of the countryside. The cemetery is under the direction and control of a Board of Directors consisting of seven directors, one of whom is the rector of St. Michael's. There are nearly 770 burial plots in the cemetery.

The cemetery has been supporting St. Michael's and our surrounding community for 65 years. The Board is planning some long-deferred maintenance activities and projects to enhance the appearance of the cemetery. Repairing the road, addressing drainage issues, and landscaping are just some of the items to be addressed. We would also like to have the resources to ensure that the cemetery is cared for in years to come. To finance these activities, the cemetery began a fund-raising campaign this past September. We are grateful to those who have contributed and ask those who might be interested in supporting the cemetery to prayerfully consider making a donation. The cemetery is a tax-exempt organization as described in Section 501(c)(13) of the Internal Revenue Code, and donations are deductible for federal income purposes.

If you would like to make a donation, request a pledge card or need any additional information, please contact Mick Pompelia at mpompelia@gmail.com.

HELP WANTED: LIGONIER CAMP AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Make a move that makes a difference! If the possibility of a job that strives to advance the work of Christ in a beautiful natural setting sounds intriguing, Ligonier Camp and Conference Center may be the place for you. We are currently seeking a part-time (20 hours) Registration Assistant. You'll join a dynamic year-round team of individuals committed to hosting and serving families, campers, local churches, and youth groups. Interested individuals should contact Tim Habecker (724-238-6428) or email at thabecker@ligoniercamp.org.