



Weekly at St. Brendan's

Sunday: 10:00 a.m. Worship, via live streaming

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UcKCY2BEJXlqMoVc_nXXG7ew

Monday: 8:15 a.m. Daily Morning Prayer, via zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4796201105?pwd=bXM5OHJ2UEh4TXhQT1RkZnVrQWNVdz09>

Meeting ID: 479 620 1105 Passcode: 092720

11:00 a.m. Be a Modern Episcopalian, via zoom

Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/4575423762>

1:00 p.m. Bible Study

Tuesday: 7:00 a.m. AA meeting, via zoom

Dial in: 312-626-6799 Meeting Id:345 892 252

8:00 a.m. Staff meeting, via zoom

Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/4575423762>

11:00 a.m. Bible Study, via zoom

Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/4575423762>

4:30 p.m. Book Club discussion, via zoom

Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81484853481>

6:00 p.m. Bible Study

Saturday: 9:30 a.m. Women's virtual Coffee Hour

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8944116431>

Sunday, March 21, 2021

Celebrant: 10:00 a.m. The Rev. Regis Smolko

Participating and representing St. Brendan's in prayer and worship and receiving Holy Eucharist for all members and friends of St. Brendan's.

The Priest's Corner

The Sacramental Life: Reconciliation of a Penitent (Penance)

I was surprised by how many people, usually Roman Catholics considering The Episcopal Church, asked me whether we had the Sacrament of Reconciliation—often called “Confession”? Most were surprised when I answered, “Yes, we call it a ‘sacramental’ though. And it goes by the official tag, ‘Reconciliation of a Penitent.’ Sometimes it’s called ‘Penance’ too.” It is ‘the rite in which those who repent of their sins may confess them to God in the presence of a priest, and receive the assurance of pardon and the grace of absolution.’” (Book of Common Prayer, p. 859)

This sacramental is perhaps the least understood. Why would one tell God something that God already knows ... why, for crying out loud, in the presence of another person? Here's why. There are times in our lives when things we do (or don't do) block us from growing spiritually. They stand between us and God, and we can't get around them. Penance is a way of removing the barriers that our bad behaviors create.

Yes, God already knows our sins even before we speak them, but it can be a helpful practice for our spiritual journey to spend time contemplating our sins and confessing them in the presence of others. This often helps us to be clear-eyed about the realities of our behavior. To share a confession with a person who is obligated to confidentiality—and then hear that God loves and forgives us in spite of what we've done—can be a very healing experience. I know some people who partake of this practice with regularity, and they find it uplifting to their faith.

In the Episcopal Church, penance is not mandatory before receiving Eucharist as it is in some other churches. You might notice though that confession of sin is part of the service of the Holy Eucharist every Sunday. It occurs right after the Prayers of the People and before The Peace. After people ask forgiveness for sins against God and neighbor, the priest raises a hand over the people and pronounces a general absolution of sins.

The Sacramental of Reconciliation is a matter of strictest confidentiality. If you ever desire to have this experience, simply contact Pastor Julie or me, and we will gladly celebrate this experience with you. In addition, The Reconciliation of a Penitent can be found in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP), pages 448-453. This can be a very special Lenten Practice. If you sense this might be something you need or desire to do, I'd suggest you reach out. I personally have had the experience a number of times, and it helped very much.

**All good,
Regis+**



A Brendan's Family & Friends donation was given in memory of Vincent Donato from his children, Toni Passarello and Frances Donato.



SPIRITUALITY GROUP. We are looking at the possibility of starting a spirituality group at St. Brendan's. It will be based on our church's beliefs, but will focus more on embracing our connections to each other, to nature and to all of God's creatures.

We will employ things such as meditative walks in the woods, labyrinths, retreats (including silent retreats), practices of other religions and, of course, prayer. We will utilize any activity that reminds us that everyone and everything is connected.

If you have an interest in this Spirituality Group, please contact Donna Aiello, donna.aiello@forecastdirect / 412-759-1521 or Cameron Grosh, grosh.cameron@gmail.com / 717-404-0108. Thank you!

NEXT FORUM: Training and Challenges in Suburban Policing.

Our next Public Forum, Training and Challenges in Suburban Policing, will be held this **Tuesday, March 23 at 7:00 p.m.** Participating in this Forum, which will focus on Police Department's perspective, are:

Following up on our Forum last month with speaker Professor David Harris, who spoke on Policing and Social Justice, our next Public Forum is Training and Challenges in Suburban Policing, and will focus on Police Departments' perspective. Participating on the panel are:



- Yvonne Eaton-Stull, DSW, LCSW, of Slippery Rock University,
- Chief Thomas Vulakovich, who will present on Hampton Township's pilot program that sends social work interns out on police calls,
- Lt. Robert Synan of the Allegheny County Police Academy, who will speak to the training of suburban departments, and
- Chief Walter Healy of Franklin Park Police, who will focus on Franklin Park's training of police officers, and any issues they have.

This Public Forum is sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Church of the North Hills together with St. Brendan's Justice Ministry. To register for the March 23 Forum, email Katie StBrendansKatie@gmail.com.

For more information, visit our website at stbrendans.org. This is another Forum that you won't want to miss!

Senior Warden's Corner

This March has been an exceptional month, that has seen important and upbeat discussions among the leaders of the parish regarding the short- and longer-term future of St. Brendan's. In the past few days, I prepared detailed written accounts of two of the most important of those developments: (1) our plans to reopen our church building for in-person attendance (gradually, I would stress!) and (2) our intention of embarking on a process of discernment that will ultimately lead to the calling of a new priest-in-charge to succeed Fr. Regis.

By the end of next week, everyone in the parish should have received a copy of each document—by snail mail, by email or by spotting them on our Web site or on social media. I will not repeat here the substance of each announcement. Instead, I simply urge you to read them carefully and reflect on what part(s) you may play as the two processes roll out.

Questions are always welcome and should please come to me directly (austover@gmail.com or 508-688-9554).

The Vestry and our clergy will be working hard to keep you updated as we move forward. As they say, "Watch this space!"

Tim Austin



Easter Altar Flowers. If you would like to make a contribution for the flowers that will be on the altar Easter Sunday, send an email to Katie StBrendansKatie@gmail.com. Be sure to include in your email, the name/s of those the flowers are for, either in memory of, in celebration of or in thanksgiving for. Any amount is welcome. Submitted information will be printed in the bulletin on Easter Sunday. Make your check, in any amount, payable to St. Brendan's and write "Easter Flowers" on the memo line.

During this 2021 Lenten season, Bishop McConnell invites us all to participate in **Five-Minute Lent** on Monday through Saturday evenings from 7:00-7:05 p.m. via Zoom. Five-Minute Lent begins on Thursday, February 18, and will run through Wednesday, March 31 (the day before Maundy Thursday). The series is called **Expecting Life** and will follow John 12 verse by verse, which is the chapter just prior to Jesus' passion, crucifixion, death... and resurrection. **The Zoom link is:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82717703921?pwd=MGpHMHNZGF0Vj9xSjl1dDNmc3hkZz09> **Passcode: Lent**

Confirmation! In hopeful anticipation of the Bishop's visit on May 2, youth seeking to be confirmed need to begin the final preparation for their confirmation.

While the church is still not opened, we will meet via Zoom. Once the weather improves, I will try to have us together as we are able to be together. We will be using *My Faith, My Life: A Teen's Guide to the Episcopal Church* for our preparation.

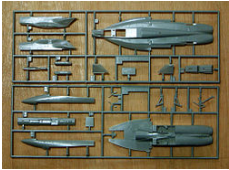
Deciding upon confirmation is personal and is not age-based but a mark on a young person's faith journey. Do you think you are ready to affirm the promises made on your behalf in your baptism? Our preparation class is to explore what it means to be a child of God, a Christian and an Episcopalian.

Please contact Pastor Julie for more information at 412-995-0915 or email at jlsphone1@gmail.com.



St. Brendan's Women's Get Together - All St. Brendan's women are welcome to "drop in" to chat on Saturday mornings at 9:30 am. The link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8944116431>.

The Children's Corner



A new heart?!?

In the readings for this week, the Psalm is about creating in us a new heart. When I was a little girl I had vision of replaceable hearts. I heard about broken hearts, heart breaks, and big hearts, so I assumed that hearts came in all sizes and if one broke, you simply could take it out and get a new one ~ like in the game *Operation*.



But in this week's reading, King David, who we think wrote most of the Psalms, wrote, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence and take not your holy Spirit from me." And this is kind of like asking for a new heart.

When I was a little girl, my older brother loved to put together model cars. He would spend hours putting his cars together, painting them, and putting them in the right displays. But if he made me mad, I would hide parts of the model he was working on so he couldn't finish it. And if I was really mad at him, I might spill the paint. I never felt good about myself afterwards, and usually told him I did it and apologized. But it was never quite enough.

I knew I hurt his feelings, and my heart ached because of what I had done. And that ache didn't go away even when said I was sorry. That heart ache still tugged at me. It is a kind of reminder that I have done something wrong and saying I'm sorry wasn't enough. That heart ache reminded me I needed to do something else too.

That doing something else is what David is saying in the Psalm this week when he writes "renew a right spirit within me." After I say I'm sorry, what do I do then? Do I continue to do those bad things like hide parts of my brother's model or should I change my ways? If I know I did something wrong, or bad and I didn't change my ways, then saying I'm sorry is not enough. And that is the ache in my heart.

But if I make a change, even if my brother didn't notice each time I didn't hide a piece of his model, I know I'm different, I know I'm trying and I know I don't want to be alone. I want my brother to know I love him and I'm trying to do better.

This is David saying, "I did something wrong, I've said I'm sorry, and I don't know if I've been forgiven, but please God, don't you leave me too. Please stay here with me, don't let me be alone." And this is our new heart.

And the best news is, God doesn't leave us alone. When we make a mistake, or do something bad, we will be forgiven. And today, my brother and I are friends – but he won't let me near his work table.

Peace,
Julie+



Need a gift for someone who has everything? Would you like a way to acknowledge a special family event like a baptism or a birthday? A donation to the Brendan's Family and Friends (BFF) fund is the perfect way to honor that special person or event. BFF funds are earmarked for unbudgeted building needs. Please contact Katie if you're interested. Your donation will be noted in the Little Log if you wish. Thank you for making a difference at St. Brendan's by becoming a BFF donor!



Do you have a special prayer request? Contact Ruth Horton rvhorton@gmail.com. Pastoral Care Ministry members will include those persons in daily prayers or send out a prayer via text or email to someone if requested. All prayers and requests are kept confidential.

VOTING BY MAIL 2021! Last November, 2.6 MILLION Pennsylvanians cast their ballots by mail, safely and securely from home.



If you applied to vote by mail last year and signed up for the "permanent" vote-by-mail list, and you want to automatically receive ballots for this year's elections, **you must sign up again for 2021, since this list is only on an annual basis.** You can fill out the application that was mailed to you and return it to your county board of elections, [or complete one online here.](#)

It takes just a few minutes to sign up to get both your mail-in ballots for 2021. Your county will keep you updated as your ballots are processed, printed, mailed to you, and returned. If you didn't register for the "permanent" list last year, but are interested in joining, [you can read more here](#) and [sign up using the same online form.](#)

Voters should request their mail-in ballot **before May 11, 2021** to make sure they have time to receive their secure ballot and return it in time. If you're signing up to vote by mail online, just make sure you're registered to vote beforehand and have either your PA driver's license number or social security number handy.

Please make sure your friends and family are aware of this! Thank you for being a voter.

CRIS Advocacy. (Christian Response In Emergency Situations). This week we are supporting the work of The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. A continuation of great need for help to relieve the hunger status resulting from COVID-19.

It was decided that we will **carefully and incrementally reopen St. Brendan's for in-person worship.** The recent improvement in key COVID statistics, the increasing numbers of our members who are fully vaccinated, and the recent lifting of public health restrictions by Governor Wolf all contributed to this decision.

Here are the key details:

- The first service to which we will invite a limited number of our members will be the 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist on Easter Sunday.
- Those who are interested in attending in person in the coming weeks are invited to submit their names, their preferred means of contact (phone, text, or email), and the size of their household groups to Katie by 5:00 p.m. on Palm Sunday. Email: StBrendansKatie@gmail.com; telephone at church: 412-364-5974.
- At this early stage, we will allow children over the age of 12 to attend with their parents.
- On Monday, March 29, we will draw at random between 10 and 15 names from the list (depending on the size of each group).
- The individuals or groups selected for Easter Day will receive personal invitations to attend the service and directions about the practices they will need to follow.
- Those on the list whose names are not drawn for Easter Day will be eligible for the drawing for the following Sunday (and so on, assuming that we are able to remain open).
- Our practical experience and the comfort level of our stream team with their own safety each Sunday will determine how many invitees we select for the following service.
- Prior to Easter Sunday, the church furniture will be reset in the way to which we are all accustomed. (We will be using the upholstered wood chairs and not the plastic chairs from the Social Hall, since the current guidance from the CDC suggests that transmission of the coronavirus via contaminated surfaces is "uncommon.") However, the use of masks and hand sanitizer and the maintenance of appropriate distancing will remain absolute requirements for all who attend our services.
- The way in which Holy Communion will be distributed is a matter for our clergy to determine.
- Above all, perhaps, it must be clearly understood that we will continue to monitor with care the COVID-19 statistics for our region. Any deterioration in the indicators may be grounds to abandon this plan before its implementation on Easter Day or to close the church once again after we have reopened.

Anyone with concerns or questions is very welcome to contact me at any time (austover@gmail.com or 508-688-9554). May our Eastertide this year be blessed in a particularly special way as we embark on the next stage in our voyage as St. Brendan's.

Tim Austin
Senior Warden



The Haitian project. The first school bus is waiting for Harrisburg to send back the DOT forms to give the okay to transport the school bus to Miami and then onto Haiti. We are collecting, organizing and counting items for a second bus and still could use donations. As you already know we need summer clothes, shoes, underwear, belts, ties, purses, backpacks, toothpaste and toothbrushes, towels, washcloths, sheets and hats. Thank you for the items that you have donated in the plastic bin outside of St. Brendan's. Keep them coming!!!

News from Diocesan Council. The ECW (Episcopal Church Women) will be making grants to support hand-on ministries that help children, adults and families in need of assistance with food, nutrition, health care, housing, education and counselor. For more information contact Joyce Donadee.



You can help. We have tubs outside to the right of the front doors for any food donations. Or, if you wish, checks can be sent to St. Brendan's and we will convert them into grocery gift cards. We have now discovered a new mission. There are halfway houses in lower income areas who share any donations to them with their neighbors, and we will be supporting them with some of our food donations. This gives those residents a sense of meaningful purpose, being the ones to share rather than the ones in need. We will continue distributing food to the North Hills Food Bank and the Community Outreach.

Need food? We can help. If you or someone you know has a food shortage, contact the church and we will be happy to help.

Upcoming Events from our Neighboring Churches

How To Be A Good White Ally (And A Good Black Friend)

With **Tony Norman**, Award-Winning Post-Gazette Columnist and Associate Editor.

Is it possible to have conversations about race without walking on eggshells, being offended by the truth, getting defensive, or feeling guilty? The answer is yes, according to Tony Norman.

Join The Community Presbyterian Church of Ben Avon on Thursday, March 25, at 7:00 pm for an informal look at how we can greet new ideas with gratitude and grace, and grow from our misunderstanding and differences. To register, go to cpcba.org.



Black History Month Discussions Continued

The Friday night discussions by the Universal Unitarian Church of the North Hills are continuing into March. The group watches a short Ted talk following by a discussion of the video. It's a lively and thoughtful discussion, and best of all, no reading involved!

If you haven't been to an event yet, no worries! Each lesson is independent of the others. So, please join the Unitarians along with other Brendanites at 8:15 p.m. on Friday, March 26. If you would like to attend, please send your name to scregistration@uucnh.org

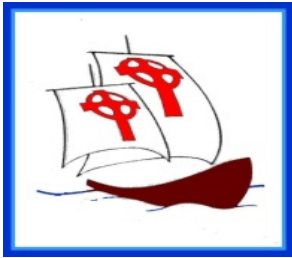
Dear Friends of St. Brendan's,

St. Brendan's Episcopal Church would like to thank, and request your prayers for, the following parishioners and friends or family of parishioners. Each is a medical professional or an emergency first responder who is helping people cope with the Coronavirus outbreak. They are using their skills and risking their own well-being by tending to those whose health has been threatened.

We are grateful for their selfless dedication and ask that God watch over them, keep them safe and give them both strength and rest. We hope that you will join the church in thanking and praying for:

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|---|-----------------|
| Kimberly Becker | Maddie Bell | Kate Burnett | Frank Casey | Bob Cerra |
| Brenna Conroy | Adele Cotter | James Cotter | Laura Dugan Demers | Nicholas Demers |
| Andrea Dickerson | Franklin Park Police Department | | Franklin Park Volunteer Fire Department | |
| Rebecca Donadee | Chris Fleissner | Amanda Gagnon | Jeff Gagnon | Shelley Gagnon |
| Betsy Gentile | Lynne Gloor | Ann Hockenberry | Beth Lutz Hoffman | Eric Hood |
| John Jacobs and staff | Kerri Jensen | Dr. Ken Judson | Luke O'Neill | Kim Pierce |
| Becca Sands | Warren Sands | Andrew Smith | Justin Zeigler | Cindy |
| Jennifer | Julie | Mike | Patrick | |

Prayer for our medical personnel and first responders. Lord, please bless and care for all healthcare workers and first responders. Grant them wisdom, knowledge, skill and compassion so that they may be instruments of Your healing power for those they serve and care for. Give them strength and support. May they be able to do their work in a spirit of love and kindness and mercy. Keep them safe and well as they make personal sacrifices on behalf of Your community. Amen.



ST. BRENDAN'S MISSION

Jesus said, "I have come to give life – life in all its fullness." John 10:10.
Our mission is the realization of fullness through:
the worship of God; service to the world;
active concern for each other;
and education to expand mind and spirit.

VESTRY MEMBERS

Sr. Warden: Tim Austin
Jr. Warden: Janice Moore
Adult Formation: Ron Ladick
Audio-Visual Technology: Sean Sweeney
Communication: Cameron Grosh
Finance: Mary Bertucci
Fundraising: Larry Toler
Inreach & Hospitality: Tim Austin
Newcomers: Tim Austin
Outreach: Donna Aiello
Safety & Security: Ron Ladick
Secretary/Clerk: Lauren Ramakrishna
Stewardship: Larry Toler
Treasurer: Ellen Groves
Assistant Treasurer: Roger Botti
Worship: Cameron Grosh

WORSHIP MINISTRY LEADERS

Acolytes: Anelisa Tarrant
Altar Guild: Anelisa Tarrant
Pastoral Care Ministry: Ruth Horton
Flower Ministry: Libby Juel
Sylvia Affleck
Scheduler: Kelli Cerra
Ushers: Eric Helmsen

PARISH LIFE MINISTRY LEADERS

Audit: Kevin Boyd
Book Club: Pat Carl
Book Discussion Club: Julie Smith
Brendan's Boots: Tom Waseleski
Dinner Group: Janice Moore
Finance Chair: Mary Bertucci
Green Thumb Gang: Dan Moore
Historian: Ellen Groves
Holiday Arts & Crafts & Cookie Walk: Karen Dennis
Memorial Garden: Dan Moore
Merry Meal Makers (M&M's): Saundy Waseleski
Parish Profile: Inactive
Reiki Ministry: Melanie Popovich
Rental: George Snyder
Scholarship: Tom Waseleski
Sticks & Strings: Joni Reis
Debbie Jennings
Web Site: Kelli Cerra

OUTREACH MINISTRY LEADERS

Adopt-A-Highway: Tom Waseleski
CRIES Advocacy: Ellen Groves
ESL: Tim Austin
Joyce Donadee
Linda Schneider
Garden of Hope: Tim Michael
Justice Ministry: Donna Aiello
Miryam's: Julia Wick
North Hills Food Banks: Ruth Horton & Donna Aiello

ST. BRENDAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Corner of Rochester & McAleer Roads
2365 McAleer Road, Sewickley, PA 15143
Phone ~ 412-364-5974

Office hours ~ Monday thru Friday 8:00-2:00

Web Site ~ <http://www.stbrendans.org>

Online Parish Directory ~ <https://www.stbrpit.com/> (authorization required for access--apply online)

Facebook ~ <https://www.facebook.com/StBrendansEpiscopalChurch/>

Nextdoor ~ <https://franklinparkpittsburgh.nextdoor.com/pages/st-brendans-episcopal-church-sewickley-pa/recommend/>

Priest, Regis Smolko ~ regisjs@verizon.net

Youth Education Director, Julie Smith ~ jlsphone1@gmail.com

Parish Administrator, Katie Cervone ~ StBrendansKatie@gmail.com

Music Director, Daniel May ~ bluesub@verizon.net

Nursery Director, Meghan Thompson ~ meghanthompson328@gmail.com