



Sunday, December 12, 2021

Celebrant: The Rev. Regis Smolko

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

Weekly at St. Brendan's

- Sunday** 8:00 am Worship, in person
10:00 am Worship, in person
10:00 am Worship, via live streaming https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkCY2BEJXlqMoVc_nXXG7ew
- Monday** 7:45 am Daily Morning Prayer, via zoom, Monday thru Saturday
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4796201105?pwd=bXM5OHJ2UEh4TXhQT1RkZnVrQWNVdz09>
Meeting ID: 479 620 1105 Passcode: 092720
Varying office hours, call ahead
11:00 am Be a Modern Episcopalian, via zoom <https://zoom.us/j/4575423762>
4:00 pm Bible-Lite Group <https://zoom.us/j/4575423762>
- Tuesday** 7:00 am AA meeting, via zoom Dial in: 312-626-6799 Meeting Id:345 892 252
8:00 am Staff meeting, via zoom <https://zoom.us/j/4575423762>
11:00 am Bible Study, via zoom <https://zoom.us/j/4575423762>
4:30 pm Book Club discussion, via zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81484853481>
6:30 pm New Brendanites, via zoom <https://zoom.us/j/4575423762>
- Wednesday** Varying office hours, call ahead
3:00 pm Deacon hours
7:00 pm Evening Service
- Friday** Varying office hours, call ahead

The Priest's Corner

This week's Priest's Corner is the 199th one I got to write. Next week I'll write the final one for now. Who knows? (I may be called to write another one as a guest contributor some day?) So, next week's Priest's Corner will be the 200th. That sounds like a milestone of sorts and a good finishing number.

I will have been your priest for five years on December 17th (4.5 years as your priest-in-charge). I was received as an Episcopal Priest on December 16, 2016 by Bishop McConnell. I came to Saint Brendan's, as an intern, four months (August 2016) before my Reception. I was sent to St. Brendan's to learn the liturgical and practical nuances of Episcopal priesthood under the capable guidance of Fr. Ted Babcock. He was an excellent mentor. He also invited me to get involved with the "Appreciative Inquiry" process that St. Brendan's had just entered to understand its developing values which would eventually culminate in the choice of a new priest. I never thought that this would be me—nobody did.

This history at St. B's means I had the potential for writing 208 priest's corners. (I owe you 8 more, please, don't dock my pay?!? LOL!) Katie must have given me those 8 weeks off. (You all know I worked for her all these years. "Regis, do this! Regis, do that!" was constantly heard disturbing the quiet of that holy narthex! I kept quiet about this—until now!)

You know, I'm kidding! I can't tell you how much Katie has added to my ministry as your priest. She has a sensitivity, (a gift from God), that knows how to give you exactly what you need when you need it. I know how much you have all experienced that same warmth and sense of humor—that's why you came to the church on days other than Sundays, often lined up to see her. Sometimes Katie would tell me how she had to take work home or how she wasn't able to get to something considered important by the people waiting for it. This was often because she spent time chatting and laughing and even crying with parishioners who dropped by the church. LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING. Every time she worried about this and spoke to me about her concern, I responded by encouraging her to keep doing what she so naturally did. This gift, I always saw, as being "from God." I saw (see) this as a significant ministry to St. Brendan's people. I still do. We are a church first, not a business. God has a way of getting both done in a timely way. The one that people remember for decades is the ministry one. I am thankful to God and grateful to Katie for helping me be a good priest.

Continuing on with my timeline at St. Brendan's:

I expected to leave St. Brendan's a few months after I was received as an Episcopal priest in December five years ago. But God seemed to have other plans! Fr. Ted felt called to begin his retirement earlier than he expected. Since I was now able to function as a priest, it was simply convenient for all that I stay on and function as temporary priest until the search committee could present a candidate to become the 4th rector/priest-in-charge of St. Brendan's. (That's not counting Fr. Bill Pugliese who had served as Interim Priest for five years earlier in the parish's history.)

I was liking what I got to do and people were getting to know me—and I think, see some potential for me to be the next priest-in-charge. Ken and I were planning to move to Florida. Then, out of the blue, Ken gets an opportunity to double his business. This led us to see our Florida plans differently—and, to make a long story short, to understand that I could be around for a few more years. I remember presenting the possibility of my staying on and being the priest to then-Senior Warden, Tom Waseleski. I was careful in my presentation to Tom. "I have good news and perhaps bad news." He was curious. "The good news is I might have a priest option for St. Brendan's; the bad news ... it is I." He smilingly responded a few times, "And the bad news is...?" In a day or two, the priest search stopped, and the rest is history. A title for these years might be "The Best Five Years in the Lives of Ken and Regis."

Next week I hope to talk about my gratitude for all the Brendanites and the clergy. Let me end this Corner by mentioning my life with our Senior Wardens. I was told by my mentors going into the role of priest-in-charge that a great relationship with your Senior Warden is key to success. I've been with three during my tenure. The three Senior Wardens I got to work with were beyond great. They were exactly what we needed for these crucial years for St. Brendan's.

This started with Jim Gray. For several months, most of them as the "in-between" priest and then one full month as priest-in-charge, Jim and I worked closely together. I had also had a working relationship with Jim when I was interning at St. Brendan's before that. My strong relationship with Jim really blossomed, however, when I was received as a priest. Jim and I share a special closeness because he witnessed the "Oath of Conformity" I pronounced at my Reception as Episcopal Priest. He also signed my first contract with St. B's and taught me how to work with a vestry.

For the next two years, Tom Waseleski and I grew a partnership that set the foundations for the growth of St. Brendan's for the future. Tom's experience (he had been Senior Warden twice before); his solid ideas and advice; his ability to honor, encourage and ground my free-thinking, creativity and idealism; and most importantly, his warmth and friendship; all these made me a good priest. When we had to end our time together in this relationship, I cried.

My third Senior Warden experience brought the "anchor" that I and our church desperately needed to deal with the unknown storms that awaited us. (This one will be longer than the other two because it deserves a context. We had a pandemic during this one, you know.)

Thank God for Tim Austin! We entered this stage with a healthily growing church. St. Brendan's doubled its representation to Diocesan Convention—a monumental move from 2 deputies to 4. This is huge and is based on our membership-growth. Our attendance nearly tripled prior to an intruder named, COVID.

When Tim's term as Senior ends in January 2022, he will have served two years (730 days). Imagine: 670 of those days were to be dealing with a closed-for-the-most-part, now- slowly-reopening church. No-one in the history of St. Brendan's (or the Pittsburgh Diocese) has had such challenges due to a pandemic of catastrophic proportions. Tim and I had almost 90 days together as Senior Warden and Priest free from the pandemic. Those were glorious days; our biggest problems were growth-related. (For example, we had to reserve a table with signage at Coffee Hour for our elderly so they could avoid the running of children around the 45' food table.) Oh, how simple life was when the major crisis to deal with was the allegation that one of the elderly might have used a cane to slow down a running child!

I remember once during a horrible snowstorm how Tom Waseleski and I agonized over whether we should close the church for one day's Sunday Services. That was so big until Tim and I, eventually along with a committee, had to close the church for almost two years. I think you get the picture. Not only this: there were personal fears of contracting the virus—very intimate vestry and family threats to life. The storms were real to all of us personally and familiarly; but I must say to have the added responsibility to keep a church of precious people safe, while realizing that those very people needed a sacred place to go to in order to salve their fears was sometimes paralyzing.

Frankly, I don't know how we did it, but I do know we (I) would not have been able to weather this storm without Tim being Senior Warden. (I know he wouldn't want this written, but I'm exerting my limited spiritual authority.) His attention to detail, his willingness to research and explain threats to us, his boldness in resolve even when people criticized the judgment of us keeping the doors closed as long as we did, his willingness to take the reins of projects that others had to abandon due to their own crises and so much more, like his gentleness with and understanding of me as I expressed my fears and confusion; all of these leadership skills and his human empathy within a crisis helped me to be a good priest and survive this ordeal. Along with the Stream Team (more on them, next week) and the vestry; we said, "Yes!" to the gift of technology, and as a result, kept St. Brendan's alive through the worst pandemic, perhaps ever.

So please know, Jim, Tom and Tim, I am deeply grateful to have been with you three through this beautiful, holy journey. (I do wish I would have had at least one year with a female Senior Warden, but hopefully the next priest will get that blessing.) So, this Corner is a bit long—but why limit gratitude?

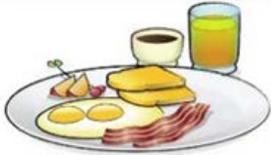
**All good to you,
Regis+**



The Holiday Season is hard for those whose hearts are hurting. You are not alone. **Our Blue Service** is a contemplative service offering hope, remembrance, and healing for those carrying pain during this season. St Brendan's is having two services . . .
Saturday, December 11 at 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday, December 29 at 7:00 p.m.



Brendan's Boots. In the spirit of Christmas, the parish hiking group will trek through downtown Pittsburgh on Saturday, **Dec. 11**, to see the city in its Christmas finery. Participants will meet at St. Brendan's at 9 a.m. and carpool to the North Shore. Walkers will check out the life-size Nativity scene at USX Tower, the William Penn Hotel's classic interior, the Santas Around the World display and ice rink at PPG Place and more. After some time at the Market Square Holiday Market, the group will have lunch nearby. All are welcome; feel free to bring a friend. For more info, please contact Tom Waseleski, twaseleski@comcast.net.



St. Brendan's **Men's breakfast** for December will be at the Bob Evans in Cranberry on **Monday, December 13th at 9:00 a.m.** I hope you will join us then. Please e-mail Steve Horton (stephenshorton@gmail.com) by Sunday dinner time so that I can give them a number to expect.

The address for Bob Evans is 932 Sheraton Drive, Mars, PA 16046, [724 776-4190](tel:724-776-4190).
 Menu: <https://www.bobevans.com/menu>.

Children's Corner

Sharing joy at Christmas. When we think of our favorite Christmas memories, we usually think of the joy that moment gave us and the memory of joy we hold in that memory.

I have two very special Christmas memories ~ and they both are about sharing joy.

The first memory happened on Christmas night, after a day of celebration with my very large family, where we had a really wonderful meal, and a lot of presents and singing. It started to snow, the big, puffy flakes of snow that make the world look beautiful. My Dad said, "let's get in the car and go for a ride." We left the house, where we had just finished cleaning up from the celebration, piled into the car – my mom & dad, two of my sisters and myself, and we drove around looking at the Christmas lights.

Then we arrived at the house of my father's friend Curly, and his wife Dorothy. Curly and Dorothy were elderly, lived in the country, and didn't have children, so their Christmas was a lot different from ours. I hadn't realized my mother packed meals and gifts for them. They seemed really glad to see us, and we had another Christmas with them opening their presents from us and we had dessert with them.

Then . . .
 they . . .
 turned . . .
 on the lights . . .
 in their back yard.



And it was magical. The snow was falling, the lights came up from the ground, and wild animals – deer, birds, fox, and raccoons were all eating from feeders in their back yard.

I still remember by sisters and myself, kneeling on the couch, facing the window, and wondering if the animals came to feed at this time just for us.

Whenever we get together for Christmas, my sisters and I recall this memory. It was a night of sharing, and it was a night of joy.

So this week, when we light the joy candle, the pink candle, think about what you can share to help create joy. And remember, if we want to have this experience of the *real* joy Jesus wants for us, we share. By sharing what God has given to us, we receive an even bigger gift – the gift of joy.

Next week, my Christmas memory of love,

**Peace
 Julie+**



Stewardship 2022

More footsteps are continuing to fill our Stewardship path for 2022. We now have received 57 pledges which is 57% of our 100 pledge goal. If you haven't already, please consider what you might be able to pledge in support of St. Brendan's ministries for 2022. We look forward to seeing more footsteps join us on our path as more of our fellow Brendanites commit to walk in love with us each week.

Senior Warden's Corner

On the second and fourth Thursdays of each month, the students enrolled in our Conversation Friends ESL classes come together online for a "Conversation Café." Rather than follow lesson plans devised by one of the program's volunteers, we simply select a topic and allow everyone to contribute to the discussion—learning in the process about the subtle conventions that govern English speakers' interactions with their friends and colleagues.

Today's topic was "Bargains." We explored the pros and cons of online shopping; the mysteries of a BOGO sale; the contrast between massive outlet malls and the unique shops that line the Strip downtown; the fluctuations that affect the price of an airline ticket seemingly from one hour to the next; and the importance of obtaining multiple bids on work one needs done around the home or yard. Every student, we discovered, shared a natural interest in securing a good deal and each had advice to offer.

By any measure I can think of, St. Brendan's surely represents a spectacularly good bargain. Our \$220,000 budget may seem large until one reflects on just how much this "buys us": four part-time staff members; a beautiful worship space and social hall along with meeting rooms to use ourselves or share with others; the luxury of being able to heat and cool the facility as we need to from season to season; and a wealth of programming to enrich our lives socially, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. Your pledge towards our costs buys so much more than a Sunday service—if, of course, you take advantage of the opportunities on offer.

On Monday evening, the Vestry will continue its work on the 2022 Budget. If you already sent in your pledge—thank you! If it slipped your mind or the mailing got buried under that pile of yet-unwritten Christmas cards, please take a moment to dig it out. Pledges can be mailed to Katie at the Office or dropped into the collection plate on Sunday. Thanks for helping us plan 2022 as a year to remember.

Please use this link for the [Parish Directory](#) and book mark it as the directory is updated often!

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_NkE3ZP4ngPHe5j0TL1eeJzITMGA9G1Y/view.

CRIES Advocacy

CRIES Advocacy, (Christian Response In Emergency Situations), meets monthly on the third Sunday in the library after the 10:00 a.m. service where they determine the distribution of St. Brendan's 10% tithe of our pledged income. This week we are praying for the work of "Gifts for Like", a program dedicated to helping children learn, grow and thrive. Some aspects are clean water, books, mosquito nets and medical care. CRIES Advocacy makes a monthly donation for the purchase of meals. The next meeting is January 16th, 2022.

WANTED: Rentals Supervisor. This individual fields inquiries from folks who are looking to rent our facilities and answers their questions concerning availability, capacity, cost etc. Then, following St. Brendan's well documented policies and working with the Parish Administrator, she or he sees that the renter receives the appropriate forms and works with the renter to complete the process. George Snyder estimates that these tasks may require four hours per week, though this does fluctuate from one season to another. George has said that he will be available to train his successor.

WANTED: Scholarship Committee Chair. For 25 years, St. Brendan's has offered modest scholarships to teenagers in the parish who are pursuing higher education. The fund currently has a balance of a little under \$10,000 and most recently made awards worth about \$300 each. The bulk of the work for the Committee Chair falls in the Spring, when applications need to be solicited, received and reviewed. The current Chair is Tom Waseleski, who will be happy to brief his successor on the history and logistics of the fund.

WANTED: Memorial Garden Coordinator. Just outside the Chapel doors, you will find our Memorial Garden, in which parishioners are welcome to arrange for their cremains to be interred. Maintaining the Garden (mowing, trimming, etc.), working with potential purchasers, and ultimately managing interments fall to a small committee for which we are seeking a Coordinator to succeed Bill Spoonhoward and Dan Moore. The maintenance work is seasonal, while other functions may occur at any time.



Requested Prayers

We ask your prayers for our beloved members of St. Brendan's, especially; Charlotte Pierce, Larry Toler, Benjamin Bigelow Roche, Alice Butterworth, Sandy Nagy, Rosie and Rodge Wood, Matthew, Mark Shoemaker and Larry Tarrant.

For our parents, especially; Kenneth and Adele McCormack, Sandy Martin, Ray Militzer, Naomi Getty and Lenora.

For our family members, especially; Sue Burchill, Raphael Walton, John Barie, Marie Hazelton, Chris Sensenich, Linda Ahlbrand, Tom Groves, Mike Dixon, Nathan Schlumpf, Bob Keihl, David Pingree and Robert Donato.

And for our friends, especially; Bill Phelps and Cat Munz, Heidi Sherwin, Dennis Ranalli, Becky Horton, Diane Bruckus, Denise Nagel, Sherri Hilbert, Joan Gonzales, Heather and Dan Houle.



December 2021 Ministry Calander

Date	Lectors	Altar Guild	Sunday School	Greeters	Usher	Vestry	Hospitality
December 1 Wednesday 7:00 pm	TBD	Darrell Johnson	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
December 5 Sunday 8 & 10:00 am Thank you Regis ☩	8 Joan Beatrous 1 st AJ McKenna 2 nd Linda Limberis P Michael Donadee <i>*Readers have the option to pre-record or read live in person.</i>	8 Ellen Groves 10 Shari Tarrant	n/a	Allyson Baierl Kate Heston Wesley Bell	Tim Austin Donna Aiello	Tim Austin	The Bertucci family
December 8 Wednesday 7:00 pm	TBD	Darrell Johnson	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
December 12 Sunday 8 & 10:00 am	8 Nancy Snyder 1 st Kate Heston 2 nd Tony Turo P Donna Aiello <i>*Readers have the option to pre-record or read live in person.</i>	8 Sylvia Affleck 10 Janice Moore	n/a	Annemarie Malbon Donna Aiello Sharon Hlawati	Eric Helmsen Michael Donadee	Janice Moore	Need volunteer
December 15 Wednesday 7:00 pm	TBD	Darrell Johnson	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
December 19 Sunday 8 & 10:00 am	8 Charlotte Pierce 1 st Alan Schneider 2 nd Mary Bertucci P John Appledorn <i>*Readers have the option to pre-record or read live in person.</i>	8 Joan Klinefelter 10 Libby Juel	n/a	Kathy Miller Dave Miller John Appledorn	Dale Bertucci Anthony Bertucci	Mary Bertucci	Need volunteer
December 22 Wednesday 7:00 pm	TBD	Darrell Johnson	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
December 24 Christmas Eve Children's Service 5:00	1 st Nate Boyd 2 nd AJ McKenna P Kate Heston	Shari Tarrant Anelisa Tarrant	n/a	n/a	Allyson Baierl Mike Wick		n/a
December 24 Christmas Eve Vigil 10:00	1 st Alan Schneider 2 nd Tony Turo P Tim Austin	Anelisa Tarrant Tammy Spoonhoward	n/a	n/a	Eric Helmsen		n/a
December 26 Sunday 8 & 10:00 am Lessons & Carols, 4th	8 Tammy Spoonhoward Various Readers		n/a	Allyson Baierl Megan Overby Tim Austin	Kate Heston John Appledorn	Larry Toler	Need volunteer
December 29 Wednesday 7:00 pm	TBD	Darrell Johnson	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a



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: Lauren Ramakrishna
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
Worship: Cameron Grosh
Treasurer: Roger Botti
Assistant Treasurer: Ellen Groves

WORSHIP MINISTRY LEADERS

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

PARISH LIFE MINISTRY LEADERS

Audit: Kevin Boyd
Book Club: Chris Botti
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
Reiki Ministry: Melanie Popovich
Rental: George Snyder
Scholarship: Tom Waseleski
Sticks & Strings: Joni Reis
Debbie Jennings
Web Site: Kelli Cerra
Annemarie Malbon

OUTREACH MINISTRY LEADERS

Adopt-A-Highway: Tom Waseleski
CRIES Advocacy: Ellen Groves
ESL: Tim Austin
Joyce Donadee
Linda Schneider
Garden of Hope: Open
Justice Ministry: Ginny Volponi
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 8:00-3:00

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

Deacon, Darrell Johnson ~ johnsdj31@verizon.net

Parish Administrator, Katie Cervone ~ StBrendansKatie@gmail.com

Music Director, Daniel May ~ bluesub@verizon.net