



**Sunday, December 26, 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](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://us02web.zoom.us/j/81976791143?pwd=NnN0cW5xSFVFMmk1VlFBcVJia05LQT09>
  - 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
  - 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>
- Wednesday**
  - Varying office hours, call ahead
  - 3:00 pm Deacon hours
  - 7:00 pm Evening Service, in person
- Friday**
  - Varying office hours, call ahead

**The Priest's Corner**

**An Alternative Christmas Tree**



This is my 200th Priest's Corner and my final one as your Priest-in Charge. What a beautiful image this tree was to express my Christmas wish to all of you at St. Brendan's. This picture just landed on my inbox today. I never saw it before nor heard of it, but it symbolizes something that I felt and hopefully you felt over the past five years.

Literally this tree is in a Hungarian park called Bükk National Park. The trees' story goes like this: "Years ago, someone cut/damaged the bottom of the thinner tree. As it struggled to survive, the bigger tree began to nurture it."

So today I offer it as a precious lesson from Mother Nature that teaches us to be nurtured by and nurture others as the opportunities and needs present themselves. I believe I enjoyed both of these wonderful life experiences from and with many of you. When I look at this picture, I'm reminded of our nephew, Kenny. He was my brother's oldest son and he lived with us for a number of years and died under our loving family tent almost ten years ago. He worked for Ken; and one day preparing for work, he was refreshing his Facebook page and had a heart attack and died almost instantly. It was sudden, but we

kind of expected it to happen as he had suffered from a bad heart since his mid-20s. I recall once he went to the hospital for a checkup and the doctor noticed an extra vein around his heart. The doctor conducted more tests and examinations and found that my nephew's heart had grown another vein around itself to offer an alternative blood source that bypassed the troubled section of Kenny's heart that often shut down the process. I can remember how Kenny, Ken and I celebrated the miracle of this vein growth. I'm reminded of this as I reflect on today's gift of an alternative Christmas tree.

We are called to attach to a nurturing source when we need one; and we are called to supply a nurturing source for others when they need one. We do this well for others in need at St. Brendan's; we don't attach as well as we need to for ourselves though. We think we're bothering people or "should" be able to nurture ourselves enough. It's important to realize that it's not a sign of weakness to

attach to other sources of love, healing and uplift. It's the way of nature. Look around and see who's in need of your nurture and who might have some nourishment for us.

I am delighted that Fr. Bill Pugliese will be coming to St. Brendan's to help you through this interim period between priests-in-charge. You might not know this: Fr. Bill was my mentor and primary support system as I moved through the later stages of my transition to the Episcopal priesthood. He was a source of nurturance for me, and I know he will be that for all of you who seek this from him. Please take advantage of his presence among you during this stage of St. Brendan's growth and your growth.

I believe that many of you know that our sister, Karen Dennis, is struggling with Blood Oxygen levels due to COVID in the ICU at Passavant Hospital. Please keep her in your prayers and send her thoughts of love, support and hope. This is an example of someone going to great lengths to protect herself from this virus and how unpredictable and overreaching this plague really is. Karen was among the first ones to get all the vaccines and boosters. She led the way for many of us. It's hard to understand.

I've had the opportunity to talk meaningfully with so many of you over the last few weeks. Ken and I are so grateful for all the cards, emails, greetings, dinners, affirmations, gifts and love we have been receiving. Please know that we are very grateful. We will be in touch personally by mail with all of you once we get re-settled to give you thanks and express our deep appreciation.

In one of my interactions over the last few weeks it was shared that someone said something to the effect that they would "likely leave St. Brendan's when Regis leaves." Oh! how that would sadden me! My hope was always and is now to connect you with God and each other. That's the real St. Brendan's. It's never just the priest. To stay only because of the priest or to leave only because of the priest's departure would indicate a cult not a parish community. I really don't feel there are many people feeling this way. In fact, I'm joyfully hearing many people saying that they are connected beyond me and with the greater community of St. Brendan's. Please attach to that lasting strength. It's in the people, not the priest.

One final thing: I want to take the opportunity to also ask forgiveness from anyone I may have offended over the years. One of my strengths and at the same time "weaknesses" is creativity and resilience. I have learned how to turn on a dime and be OK with "loose ends." I realize this is not comfortable for everybody. (In fact, it can drive some people "crazy.") I sincerely ask for your forgiveness for the times that my "shifting" caused distress. I know some 8 o'clockers felt left out and spinning during some of my quick handling of situations without the greatest communication afterwards.

By and large though, I think we've done miracles together. I have few regrets. I'm leaving feeling terrific and full of life. I'm not sure what's next for me, but I have a program of recovery and a God of my understanding that I communicate with daily. I don't feel finished yet, but no clear vision quite yet. Please pray for Ken and me as we will for you. I know I must get out of the way for the next priest to gain her/his stride—and I will do so. I sincerely hope there will be a way in the future that I can add as a layperson to the fabric of St. Brendan's; at this point I can't imagine worshiping anywhere else, but visions change. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! For the opportunity to participate in nature and offer nurturance and be the recipient of it too.

**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.

**Wednesday, December 29 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Save the Date for the Annual meeting, Sunday January 30<sup>th</sup>.** We will combine services that day, the only one will be at 9:00 a.m. All ministry leaders are asked to provide a brief summary of their ministry for 2021. Please submit your report to Katie by Monday January 17<sup>th</sup>, a booklet will be compiled.

**2021 Pledges** should be paid in full by December 31, 2021. If you would like to know your outstanding pledge amount, contact Katie at 412-364-5974 or email [StBrendansKatie@gmail.com](mailto:StBrendansKatie@gmail.com).

## The Children's Corner



**With Christmas on Saturday** we have the 12 days of Christmas starting before the next Little Log. Have you ever heard the song, the 12 Days of Christmas and wondered, is Christmas is only one day, or maybe two if you go to different houses for different dinners and presents, or perhaps three or four if you have a big family and go to a lot of dinners – but 12 days????

So, what are the 12 Days of Christmas?

The answer is both about how we condense church history and the history of the song.

In Church, the Twelve Days of Christmas, December 12 to January 6, is the "travel time" for the wise men to find Jesus in the manger. Simple, easy-peasy.

But imagine a time when Christmas was not that widely celebrated. When we didn't have Christmas sales, and Black Monday Sales, and Christmas Carols for weeks, and Christmas trees, or stocking hanging. It was not that Christmas was illegal, but celebrations were frowned upon. Blame it on the Puritans – they wanted all of our focus to be on making ourselves better, so no celebrating. And

they thought Christmas especially was too much fun, so no day off, no presents, no carols. Nothing. But they could sing at church. And so long as Christmas songs were sung only in church, and if they couldn't give presents to each other, they could sing about presents that others gave each other. These presents sound rather silly to us today – after all, I'm not sure what I would do with 12 drummers drumming other than need ear plugs!!! But this song is about giving really extravagant gifts to your true love.

Some people make a game out of this song and if you forget a verse it is a cumulative song – each verse is repeated and kind of repeatedly given. So let's see if you can figure out how many presents in total are given.

The list of presents are:



Day 1 – A partridge in a pear tree

Day 2 – Two Turtledoves

Day 3 – Three French Hens

Day 4 – Four Calling Birds

Day 5 – Five Gold Rings (ba dum dum dum – thank you Miss Piggy)

Day 6 – Six Geese a Laying

Day 7 – Seven Swans a Swimming

Day 8 – Eight Maids a Milking

Day 9 – Nine Ladies Dancing

Day 10 – Ten Lords a Leaping

Day 11 – Eleven Pipers Piping

Day 12 – Twelve Drummers Drumming

But here's the catch – you each day, you add what was given the day before so to pick a random day – say Day 7 – you would receive:

Seven Swans a swimming, Six Geese a laying (again), Five Gold Rings (again), Four Calling Birds (again), Three French Hens (again), Two Turtledoves (again), and another Partridge in a pear tree.

Just as on Day 5 – you would have received:

Five Gold Rings, Four Calling Birds (again), Three French Hens (again), Two Turtledoves (again), and another Partridge in a pear tree.

So can you figure out the answer before the Magi reach Baby Jesus? If you can, email the answer to me at [jsophone1@gmail.com](mailto:jsophone1@gmail.com). I'll let you know if you got the math right – and if you do, I'll send you a surprise.

Peace,  
Julie+

**Services this week and next.**

- Wednesday December 22 7:00 p.m. Evening Service**
- Friday December 24 5:00 p.m. Christmas Pageant**
- Friday December 24 10:00 p.m. Family service**
- Saturday December 25 No Service Christmas day**
- Sunday December 26 8:00 a.m. Worship**
- Sunday December 26 10:00 a.m. Lessons & Carols**
- Wednesday December 29 7:00 p.m. Blue Service**

**PUBLIC FORUMS ARE BACK!**



**Native Americans: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow**

**Thursday, January 13 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom**

Our speaker, Michael Simms, will address the culture, traditions and challenges of Native Americans in a Q&A Format. Mr. Simms is part of the Upper Cumberland Cherokee and Seminole tribes. He has lived in Pittsburgh his entire life as an active member of the American Indian Center and has been Pow Wow coordinator for the past 11 years. His commitment is to keep Native American traditions alive by sharing them through speaking, dancing and educating the next generation. Come prepared with your questions!

Register at [StBrendansKatie@gmail.com](mailto:StBrendansKatie@gmail.com). You'll find more information at [stbrendans.org](http://stbrendans.org).

You won't want to miss this one!

*This Forum is sponsored by St. Brendan's, in conjunction with the other members of Faith in Action (Universal Unitarians of the North Hills and Trinity Lutheran Church).*


**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.

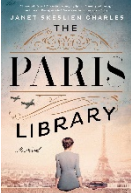


**Need a gift for someone who has everything?** Would you like a way to acknowledge a special family member? A donation to the Brendan's Family and Friend's (BFF) fund is the perfect way to honor that special person or event. BFF funds are earmarked for unbudgeted building needs. BFF fund donations are spent on unbudgeted building projects. Please pick up a BFF card in the narthex or contact Katie. [StBrendans@gmail.com](mailto:StBrendans@gmail.com) and make a donation today! Thank you for making a difference at St. Brendan's by becoming a BFF donor!

**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.

**Stewardship 2022**  

 The end of the year is quickly approaching, and our Stewardship campaign will soon come to an end. Although we have many footsteps filling our path, we're still short of our goal of 100 pledges. We have received 67 pledges to date. In order to plan for our 2022 programs, we need to know how much support we can count on. If you haven't already sent in your pledge, please consider what St. Brendan's means to you and commit to walking in love with us. Can we add your footsteps to our path? Feel free to e-mail Katie and let her know your intentions [StBrendansKatie@gmail.com](mailto:StBrendansKatie@gmail.com).

**Book Club News:** The St. Brendan's Book Club meets regularly at 7 pm on the first Thursday of each month. Meetings are typically held in the church library. At our next meeting on **January 6th**, we will be discussing, "The Paris Library" by Janet Skeslien Charles. Based on the true World War II story of the heroic librarians at the American Library in Paris, this is an unforgettable story of romance, friendship, family, and the power of literature to bring us together. Sounds like the perfect book club selection! Hope you can join us. Please feel free to contact Chris Botti at [shadypatch@msn.com](mailto:shadypatch@msn.com) if you have any questions. Thank you!




**CRIS 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 Brother's Brother Foundation, A local organization that works to improve health care, infrastructure, education and responds to natural disasters.  
**The next meeting is January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

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

## Requested Prayers

We ask your prayers for our beloved members of St. Brendan's, especially; Karen Dennis, Charlotte Pierce, Larry Toler, Sandy Nagy, Benjamin Bigelow Roche, Alice Butterworth, 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; Anna Botti, Bob, Lisa, & Ryan Berkebile, Sue Burchill, Mike Dixon, Raphael Walton, John Barie, Chris Sensenich, Linda Ahlbrand, Marie Hazelton, Tom Groves, Nathan Schlumpf, Bob Keihl, David Pingree and Robert Donato.

For our friends, especially; Jim Blackburn, Bill Phelps and Cat Munz, Dennis Ranalli, Becky Horton, Diane Bruckus, Denise Nagel, Sherri Hilbert, Joan Gonzales, Heather and Dan Houle.

We pray for all who have died, especially Matthew Berkebile.



# 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 <sup>st</sup> AJ McKenna 2 <sup>nd</sup> 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 <sup>st</sup> Kate Heston 2 <sup>nd</sup> 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 George Snyder 1 <sup>st</sup> Alan Schneider 2 <sup>nd</sup> 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 <sup>st</sup> Nate Boyd 2 <sup>nd</sup> AJ McKenna P Kate Heston	Shari Tarrant Anelisa Tarrant	n/a	n/a	Allyson Baierl Mike Wick	TBD	n/a
December 24 Christmas Eve Vigil 10:00	1 <sup>st</sup> Alan Schneider 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tony Turo P Tim Austin	Anelisa Tarrant Tammy Spoonhoward	n/a	n/a	Eric Helmsen	TBD	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



# January 2022 Ministry Calander

Date	Lectors	Altar Guild	Sunday School	Greeters	Usher	Vestry	Hospitality
January 2 Sunday 8 & 10:00 am	8 Ellen Groves 1 <sup>st</sup> Alan Schneider 2 <sup>nd</sup> Donna Aiello P Linda Limberis  <i>*Readers have the option to pre-record or read live in person.</i>	Ellen Groves Libby Juel	n/a	Kathy Miller Dave Miller Wesley Bell	Tim Austin Donna Aiello	Tim Austin	Need volunteer
January 5 Wednesday 7:00 pm	TBD	Darrell Johnson	~	~	n/a	n/a	n/a
January 9 Sunday 8 & 10:00 am	8 Nancy Snyder 1 <sup>st</sup> Tim Austin 2 <sup>nd</sup> Marilyn Mulvihill P Dean Peters  <i>*Readers have the option to pre-record or read live in person.</i>	Joan Klinefelter Shari Tarrant	n/a	Toni Passarello Saundy Waseleski Tom Waseleski	John Appledorn Allyson Baierl	Janice Moore	Need volunteer
January 12 Wednesday 7:00 pm	TBD	Darrell Johnson	~	~	n/a	n/a	n/a
January 16 Sunday 8 & 10:00 am	8 Sylvia Affleck 1 <sup>st</sup> Dean Peters 2 <sup>nd</sup> Annemarie Malbon P Tony Turo  <i>*Readers have the option to pre-record or read live in person.</i>	Sylvia Affleck Janice Moore	n/a	Donna Aiello Sharon Hlawati Dean Peters	Michael Donadee Kate Heston	Larry Toler	Need volunteer
January 19 Wednesday 7:00 pm	TBD	Darrell Johnson	~	~	n/a	n/a	n/a
January 23 Sunday 8 & 10:00 am	8 Joan Beatrous 1 <sup>st</sup> John Appledorn 2 <sup>nd</sup> Kate Heston P Marilyn Mulvihill  <i>*Readers have the option to pre-record or read live in person.</i>	Tammy Spoonhoward Phoebe Juel	n/a	Joyce Donadee Megan Overby Tim Austin	Eric Helmsen Mike Wick	Ron Ladick	Need volunteer
January 26 Wednesday 7:00 pm	TBD	Darrell Johnson	~	~	n/a	n/a	n/a
January 30 Sunday 8 & 10:00 am Children's Sunday, 5th	8 Tammy Spoonhoward 1 <sup>st</sup> Children 2 <sup>nd</sup> Children P Children  <i>*Readers have the option to pre-record or read live in person.</i>	Sylvia Affleck Libby Juel	n/a	Toni Passarello Annemarie Malbon Wesley Bell	Dale Bertucci Anthony Bertucci	Mary Bertucci	Need volunteer



### **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  
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](mailto:regisjs@verizon.net)

Youth Education Director, Julie Smith ~ [jlsphone1@gmail.com](mailto:jlsphone1@gmail.com)

Deacon, Darrell Johnson ~ [johnsdj31@verizon.net](mailto:johnsdj31@verizon.net)

Parish Administrator, Katie Cervone ~ [StBrendansKatie@gmail.com](mailto:StBrendansKatie@gmail.com)

Music Director, Daniel May ~ [bluesub@verizon.net](mailto:bluesub@verizon.net)