



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>

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

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

9:00 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>

Sunday, December 27, 2020

Celebrant: 5:00 p.m. The Rev. Julie Smith

Celebrant: 10:00 p.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

That Star!

One of the benefits of Priest's Corner #158 two weeks ago was I got Tim as an editor, and Tim got me for an editor. (I know I came out the winner on that deal.) Tim is always punctual with his work—me not so much! So I often get to read his content first, and this week's content gave me a great idea to pursue. He wrote about T S Lewis' Gift of the Magi. One sentence set me on the journey. Tim wrote, "What separates us from the Magi, of course, is that we already know the outcome of the story of which they were about to witness just the opening scene." My immediate gut response was, "And Oh! How blessed we are." It's a fixed fight. We know the outcome. I'm reminded of not being able to watch the nail-biter Super Bowl XXXIV game of 2011—Steelers vs Packers. Someone accidentally told me the score then I watched the game with some relatives who didn't know the outcome because of travel isolation. I didn't let on I knew the outcome, and had a blast making bets on plays and scores. I did confess finally because they were getting close to figuring it out. I returned all gains and we had a great laugh. But Oh, the confidence and ease with which I experienced that game! It was tension-free. I was in a fixed fight.

You know we have that assurance about our Life-with-God end-game as well. We know how the story will end; because in a real sense, it already has. God's Kingdom has and will come. In fact, it's noticeable here and now in small but unfortunately, missable ways. That every-800-years-sightable star did actually appear for some last evening (I'm writing this on Tuesday, December 22.) The Christmas star seems to actually be a conjunction – or close meeting – of Jupiter with Saturn. (See the views from Tucson and Colorado Springs below.) Perhaps the real hopeful take-away is that this imperfect phenomenon would choose to come to us in the midst of the worst pandemic to date. So many people have chosen to take hope. Yesterday's '39 Articles Group' made it clear that many were hopeful because of this star, or at least what it symbolized. I saw it with my own eyes and heard it with my very ears; people got a glitter. They shone brightly.

It's small things that are really big things that bring hope that the Kingdom of God "will out." That two vaccines are finding their ways into American arms is such a miracle. It generally takes ten years for a vaccine like this to come to reality. In fewer than nine months, we have not one, but two. God will not let God's people deteriorate in hopelessness. This realization brought out these words from Alex Azar, Secretary of the DHHS yesterday, December 21, 2020: "We are now on offense against the virus!"

On another "conjunction-of-planets" front, Brendanites have donated over \$5,000 in two weeks to assist financially-hurting members and friends as well as many who are facing evictions. Planets are coming together to form stars of hope. That these things are occurring leads me to acknowledge we are yet again involved in a fixed fight. We know by faith what the end results and outcomes are. Listen to the Wise Men and Women who still recognize stars in the heavens and on the earth and within and without. We count on each other to point this out and share the hope.

Merry Christmas and Hope-Filled New Year.

Regis+

The Christmas Star 12-21-2020



Tucson, Arizona



Colorado Springs, Colorado

A BFF donation was made in recognition of Ellen Groves, by her son Peter Groves. "She luv's St. Brendan's. It is a very important part of her. She has given lots of her time and effort to it's well being and she has some good friends who share in the fellowship."



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 and have been utilized for items such as air conditioning replacements, audio-visual equipment, and acoustic tile work in the social hall. 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!

Gifts of Joy and Wonder
December 23



At this joyful season, we pause to offer our heartfelt thanks to all those who have engaged in this year's stewardship conversation and followed up by pledging whatever they can afford to support St. Brendan's many ministries during 2021. Each pledge has brought a bright green leaf or a white blossom to our Gifts of Joy and Wonder tree.

[We still have branches that would benefit from new leaves, new blossoms. For those still discerning what they can offer, please know that you can absolutely still send in a pledge card or visit the Tithe.ly.com pledge site. In our office, Katie is always available for advice on how to complete the process.]

If you have not handed in your pledge card for 2021, feel free to print this one and mail it to church.



ST. BRENDAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
2021 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Gifts of Joy and Wonder!

In 2021, I / We pledge \$ _____ annually to St. Brendan's.

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed name _____



Help Wanted. **Looking for a way to stay connected at St. Brendan's while Covid is keeping us apart?** Here's a place where your help is needed. The Merry Meal Makers is a parish ministry that helps members during a trying time with a delivered meal. The M&M volunteers prepare (or purchase) a meal and take it to a parishioner who has been ill, lost a loved one, delivered a baby or is in a similar situation. You can imagine how much more stressful these events are during the pandemic, when many of us are alone or cut off from each other. Volunteers are notified when a parishioner's need arises and receive a list of dates from which they can choose to bring a meal to that person. This is a simple but important ministry, and most of the work is done at home. If you'd like to help, please contact Saundy Waseleski at 412-741-8727 or swaseleski@comcast.net.

Children's Corner



Have you ever heard the song, the 12 Days of Christmas and wondered, 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 Christmas songs were sung in the Puritan churches, and if they couldn't give presents to each other, they could sing about presents that others gave. 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 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)
- 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 – on 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 and I'll let you know if you got the math right – and if you do, I'll send you a surprise.

**Peace,
Julie+**



Thank you to all who attended the Eviction Forum! We were able to collect \$3,325 for those people who are in danger of eviction because of the pandemic. If you have made a pledge, please send a check to Katie at St. Brendan's, payable to PURR (Pittsburgh Union of Regional Renters). If you have not made a pledge, and would like to help those families, you can still send in a check. Thanks again to all who participated in this important educational and fundraising event!



Replacing a laptop? Many folks will be updating their home technology this season. If you're upgrading to a newer device, please consider donating the old one to the Conversation Friends ESL program. Some of our students have trouble joining our Zoom classes on cell phones while other prospective learners may not sign up at all because they know their technology is inadequate. We will work with you to ensure that your hard drive is wiped clean. Contact Tim Austin at 508-688-9554 or austover@gmail.com to discuss this possibility.

We celebrate the **January Birthdays** of:

2 Gail Gagnon	5 Mary Bertucci	5 Meghan Thompson	6 Jacob Konley	6 Matthew Wunsche
8 Linda Konley	9 Kelli Cerra	9 Ed Chapman	10 Maria Hooper	12 Donna Aiello
13 Shellie Hipsky	15 Eleanora Byrne	16 Sharon Basehore	16 Ruth Getz	16 Janice Moore
19 Zoey Boyd	21 Rob Latta	26 Ginny Volponi	30 Andrew Helmsen	31 Peter Sweet

We celebrate the **January Wedding Anniversary** of Cynthia and Ed Chapman on January 2.

If you would like to see your birthday or wedding anniversary here in The Little Log, just notify Katie StBrendansKatie@gmail.com.

Our diocese distributes a newsletter, *Grace Happens*. It contains news about upcoming programs and services; updates from parishes around southwest Pennsylvania (including St. Brendan's, of course); and information about important developments such as the ongoing search for a new Bishop. To receive future editions electronically, simply send your email address by text message: Text EPISCOPALPGH to 22828 to get started.



All ministry leaders are asked to email Katie StBrendansKatie@gmail.com a year-end summary of their 2020 group's activities by **January 2, 2021**. These reports will be included in the annual report that will be emailed to the congregation prior to the Annual Meeting. Upon request, a copy of the Annual Meeting from last year can be e-mailed to you by contacting Katie StBrendansKatie@gmail.com.

CRIS Advocacy. (Christian Response In Emergency Situations). This week we are supporting the work of World Vision, a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice.

Senior Warden's Corner

I cannot count how many times I must have taught sections of Introduction to Poetry at Loyola University. Maybe 75? Probably more. I varied my syllabus, of course, but near the end of each fall term, I always included T.S. Eliot's *Journey of the Magi*. It opens as one of the Magi (one of the Wise Men of Matthew 2:1) grumbles about the seemingly endless road trip that he and his colleagues are embarked on as they doggedly follow the star to Bethlehem.

A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp, [...]
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.

This year in particular, I think we can all empathize with this poor fellow. Caught in a winter landscape, his mind drifts back to warm-weather parties on the terraces back home, to all that this implies about family and friends and simple human interaction. This week, many of us feel similarly nostalgic, similarly uncertain about the path ahead. We do have high hopes for a vaccine-fueled rebound in 2021—so there is a star leading us forward. But our present sometimes seems to stretch out interminably.

What separates us from the Magi, of course, is that we already know the ending of the story—a story of which they were about to witness just the opening scene. It's a story that, as Eliot shows us, they will never fully understand. The child they were traveling to see was the Christ Child and the world would never be the same again—something we know that they could not! May we all seize the opportunity this week to look beyond our frustrations and regrets and ahead to a brighter time when we can meet again to worship and work together for the coming of God's Kingdom.

Tim Austin



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.



The people of St. Brendan's have done it again!!! We have received over 5 boxes of hats, gloves and even other items for **Blessed Be Educators**. They will be distributed to churches and other organizations serving needy families in January.

Thank you to all who donated so very generously! You are a blessing! And may you have the most joyous Christmas! The Justice Ministry



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.



Let's get St. Brendan's free money while doing our last-minute online Christmas shopping. If you use **Amazon Smile** (not just Amazon), it will cost you nothing (that's right! zero dollars!) but St. Brendan's will receive a modest donation based on the price of whatever you buy.

Signing up initially is simple. Search for Amazon Smile in your Web browser, then log in to Amazon Smile just as you do to Amazon--same email, same password. (You will have to create a login if you're new to Amazon altogether.) After signing in to Amazon Smile, you will be taken to a screen where you can select the Charitable Organization you wish to benefit. Type in St. Brendan's and then scroll down to find St. Brendan's Episcopal Church, Sewickley, PA. Click on this as your organization to ensure that we receive donations for every order you place.

After you have set yourself up in this way, all you will have to do is to log in through Amazon Smile each time you do your online shopping. Please tell your family, friends, co-workers and neighbors. Click here for detailed instructions [AmazonSmile](#).



The Haitian project. All items that will be shipped to Haiti are being counted. There are many donations that can be used by the people of Haiti. There is too much to list here but to give you an idea, we are sharing the count so far for a few of the items. So far we have 174 women's tops, 37 pair of men's shorts, 345 clothing items for girls and 518 items for boys. We have 101 pairs of shoes for children, 120 clothing items for babies, and 145 washable diapers and covers. We continue to count and organize the items. Thank you for your help and keep your donations coming. For more information, contact Joyce Donadee.

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 | 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 & Secretary/Clerk: Ruth Horton
Adult Formation: Dean Peters
Audio-Visual Technology: Cameron Grosh
Communication: Annemarie Malbon
Finance: Mary Bertucci
Fundraising: Larry Toler
Inreach & Hospitality: Janice Moore
Newcomers: Mary Bertucci
Dean Peters
Outreach: Donna Aiello
Safety & Security: Tim Austin
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: Eric Helmsen
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