



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 13, 2020

Celebrant: 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

By History Affirms We Voters Actually Stood Up This Year and Saved Democracy, Would We Then Again Listen to Our Better Angels?

It's very difficult living through "gas-lighting" (*using the term here loosely—more like slow gas poisoning*) and crossing over to the other side of it where life again is fresh, and the air is breathable. In some ways we get so used to living in the poison of the trauma that we don't know how to breathe in the *fresh air* of healing, or we forget what health feels like—so to speak. It's so much easier to give attention to the misbehavior of the "gas-lighter" because he is still up to the "gas-lighting" shenanigans. We ignore recognition of the healing that the "gas-lit" has begun to experience because the recovery seems so minimal given the trauma you and I've been through. We've become so accustomed to settling for *lower selves* and *lesser angels*. Our vote in the recent election has saved our democracy. Let's learn then how to again live with the *higher angels* with whom we now must re-acquaint ourselves.

Are you as tired as I am to hear people saying, "70 million voted for Trump and therefore support everything that is Trumpism?" If your answer is "Yes," this Priest's Corner is for you. If it's "No," skip this and read the other "Corners" in TLL. Biden got 80 million votes you know. It's a new day! You might actually start feeling pretty darn good about some of what's happening around us now. Breathe in the fresh air. Experience the loveliness of not hearing *wall-to-wall* lies. You deserve the peace, the joy. My God, you need this fresh air because you yet need to live through this damned pandemic and get to the other side of it alive and well. You need, we need your/our *higher angels*. I think this is why so many more people are putting out Christmas lights this year. The need to spill over cannot be contained. There has been so much accomplished. We have survived a downward spiral. Used to it or not, it's not the same as it was only a month ago. It's a whole heck of a lot better—and it will get better and better if we let it. Lose the negativity! Breathe in the new. Advent 2020 is like no other that we've ever experienced before! It's much more real. Even if you don't feel that way—ACT AS IF!!!

This past June's *The Atlantic* ran an insightful article by David Blight, professor of American history and the director of the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale University, titled "One Week to Save Democracy." I'd like to paraphrase some key points of it. The 1850's ended up in Civil War. This history's lessons can light the way for us to avoid replicating this brink-of-catastrophe lure to take the leap to devastation.

David Blight acknowledges that America's house is indeed divided—and racism is again at the core of this. It's tearing us apart in what feels like irreparable ways. Add to this the nearly 300,000 dead Americans who already succumbed to a deadly virus that's still raging. Add also the nearly 50 million+ others who are unemployed, as hundreds of businesses, police buildings and vehicles burned in American cities. Add as well the small yet violent groups (among them the president) who peddle conspiracy theories and seem to want civil war. The addition suggests our country's bonds of unity are threatening to unravel.

According to Bright, "At the heart of it all is Donald Trump's presidency. His depraved rhetoric, his vile racism, his willful ignorance, his vicious contempt for the free press, his extraordinary mishandling of the federal response to the coronavirus pandemic, and his

preening with a Bible while trying to militarize Washington, DC are the template on which peaceful and at times violent incidents have exploded into public consciousness. Authoritarians thrive on chaos and on sowing distrust in institutions, and Trump has done both."

Let's look at our history for grounding. America was coming apart in the 1850's. The Civil War dissolved the nation as it militarized, and ultimately went to war over competing visions of the future. When we lose hold on public trust; our nation is in danger of collapse. The tipping issue, of course, was slavery. You might recall when our own Michael Waseleski, at our first virtual Speakers' Series, led us once again into the horrors of the 1850's Fugitive Slave Act which mandated that any escaped slave who managed to reach the northern free states had to be returned to his/her rightful owner. The slaves would be adjudicated by special magistrates who were paid twice as much for returning a black bondsman to the South as for releasing him. The law radicalized the American abolition movement. Many fugitive-slave rescues were attempted; some succeeded but with violence against the state and police authority. The fugitive-slave issue broadened the antislavery movement into open resistance and a politicized crusade. Abolitionists had to act outside and against the law if they truly intended to defeat slavery. Moral persuasion and nonviolence gave way to out and out attacks with physical force and violence.

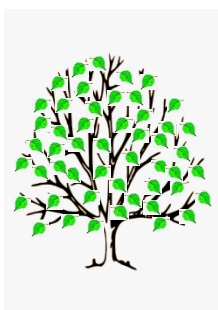
Even Frederick Douglass, a former slave himself and revered as an outstanding diplomat and orator, began to embrace threats of violence. History shows he lost his moral ambivalence about violent resistance to slave-catchers and slaveholders. He raged upon the perceived "evildoers" with a stunning furor. He tilted between rhetorical and real violence, Douglass provides a rich, if sobering, cautionary tale about the tortured relationship between protest and change. The issue of slavery broke apart the American political party system; a slow political revolution began in the North defending those advocating free labor. The shameful Dred Scott v. Sandford decision in 1857 effectively ended moderation in political life; slavery expanded and white people were not bound to respect black people because they had "no rights."

We do not want to end as the 1850's ended—in civil war and disunion. Here are some of the portents of disunion. In the 1850's, American voters went to the polls in the largest turnouts in our history. As many as 75-80% of the eligible male voters cast ballots. Sound familiar? Slavery and its related issues and power drove these people to vote, as did a thriving level of hard-nosed partisanship. One lesson of the 1850's partisanship was that it can be leveraged for power, and used to change the world. With today's protests, confusion and strategies; people of color are putting their bodies on the line; they are using their voices and some of them their pens, to make the case against racism and inequality. Some have tipped over into property destruction and violence against authority as they see it.

But we cannot forget about the vote! They didn't back down then and we didn't today. If we do forget about the vote we may be heading toward disaster. As they, so we! Another massive mobilization effort, in cities and towns across America, needs to continue to declare that this past November's election shifted the course of USA history. Democracy is back on a survival course. Let's draw on that experience to build a rejuvenated momentum. Protest and activism can be combined to forge the beginning of a national renewal as it eventually was post Civil War. We don't need another one if we envision now a celebration of American culture, both live and online, to bring us together as a civic coalition and as a people. Our *higher angels* have always been within us. They numbed during the "gaslighting," but fresh air is evidencing their return to life and influence. Choose to let them live. Stay awake! Live in light. Christmas is coming. It never really left—we did...temporarily. But we're back! Thank God! We're back!

Regis+

Gifts of Joy and Wonder *December 10*



Thank you to everyone who sent in their pledge cards or visited the [Tithe.ly.com](https://www.tithe.ly.com) pledge site during the past two weeks.




There are now a total of 50 bright green leaves on our **Gifts of Joy and Wonder** tree! Each represents a generous contribution to the ministries that St. Brendan's provides. But we are hoping for so much more in light of all that God has given us both as individuals and as a parish



Starting today, each new pledge will be represented on the tree by a white blossom. Those who have not yet pledged get the opportunity to turn our tree into a sea of dancing white petals.

If you need information about how to pledge, look elsewhere in this edition of the Little Log or call Katie Cervone at the church office, 412-364-5974. Thanks!

 **THE MONDAY MORNING MODERN EPISCOPALIAN GROUP**, is inviting all to join them on the four Monday Mornings during Advent 11:00am in a Zoom Meeting to learn all about the 39 Articles of Religion. These are the best beliefs/practices of the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Church (the best of both religious worlds) that formed the development of the Episcopal Church. You will be amazed! Look for an interesting tidbit-weekly to lure you to join in. The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, tucked away in the back of The Book of Common Prayer, is an historical document of the Episcopal Church and of the worldwide Anglican Communion. The Articles were adopted during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I in the 16th century. Anglicanism is generally not viewed as a confessional denomination and the Articles of Religion are not binding on Episcopalians. The Articles did, however, play a significant role in shaping the identity of the Church of England and Anglicanism. Join us as we look at this historical document and discuss its relevance, if any, for today.

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 _____



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 have need within our parish for gift cards and/or monetary donations. Gift cards or checks can be mailed to Katie at St. Brendan's. Or, if you would like, we can pick them up from you. We appreciate anything you are able to do and we trust in your generosity. Questions, please call Marilyn Mulvihill at 412-427-2715.

Children's Corner

Buoyed by Faith

Have you put up your Christmas lights yet? We are a bit pokey at our house and haven't done it yet. But a long time ago, people didn't put up lights until Christmas eve, so why do we put up lights, hang tinsel, and try to brighten the world?

Well your science classes will let you know more about the rotation of the earth and how it takes a year to have the earth move around the sun. But as we rotate, and tilt, and move, our days get longer or shorter. This time of year, we have the longest nights of the year – in fact on the winter solstice, we have more time in the darkness than we do in the light!

So in one of our carols we sing, "the people of darkness have seen a great light!" But we both look for the light by seeking Jesus and we create light by hanging lights outside or putting lights on our Christmas tree.

But what did people do before electricity when they didn't have blue, yellow, red, green, and white lights? Or inflatable Santa?

We had Christmas Trees and we flirted with danger and put candles on the trees. So we didn't bring the tree inside until Christmas Eve and we didn't light the candles until Christmas night to limit the fire chances. But we also have other celebrations with light – St. Nicholas Day on December 6, St. Lucy (Lucia) Day on December 13 when girls dress up in white gowns and wear a crown of candles (don't try this one at home). Both of these celebrations help prepare us for the coming of the Christ child.

Other faiths also have late fall or early winter light celebrations. Hindus celebrate Diwali, a five-day festival that celebrates the "victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance." During the festival, people prepare their homes, make special foods, create rangolis to celebrate strength, good fortune, and generosity.

And Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah, an eight-day celebration of light and life. You may have seen the candelabra that holds nine candles. During Hanukkah, Jewish people light candles each night. There is also singing special songs, reciting special prayers, and eating special foods. Children also play the dreidel game and give Hanukkah money.

So this week when you think it's dark out, look at the lights on trees, houses, and in the sky. Jesus is coming and as people in darkness, we are seeing a new light.

Peace,
Julie+



Every year St. Brendan's accepts monetary donations towards the purchase of our **Christmas Flowers, Greens and Poinsettias** in memory of those who have died, those who have made a special impact on our lives, or because we love them. If you would like to contribute to the greening of the church, and have your announcement in the bulletin on Christmas Eve, please contact Katie with your information StBrendansKatie@gmail.com and submit your contribution of any amount to the office. On Christmas Eve the names are printed in the bulletin, the tree lights are lit, and our beautiful church glorifies the birth of Christ.

CRIS Advocacy. (Christian Response In Emergency Situations). This week we are supporting the work of Environmental Defense Fund, an organization that creates lasting solutions to environmental changes.

The best e-mail address to reach Katie, the Parish Administrator, is StBrendansKatie@gmail.com. If you are using anything different, please make the change. Thank you.



We continue to offer the **opportunity to receive communion on Mondays and Fridays** by appointment. If you are interested, email Katie at StBrendansKatie@gmail.com your availability Monday/Friday and morning/afternoon. You'll come to the portico in front of the church with a mask on and approach the reception area in a socially distanced way. Regis or Julie will meet you for a brief service with Eucharist available for you to receive. We can catch up for a few minutes then depart. Those who have already received in this way once are very welcome to request an additional opportunity to receive.



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.

Senior Warden's Corner

Grinch-like, the coronavirus is doing all it can to rob us of our eager Advent anticipation and Christmas spirit. Even decorating the hearth and home seems less enjoyable when we cannot share the greenery, figurines and twinkling lights with family, friends and neighbors. But Brendanites are not so easily defeated. I have already seen and heard of several folks' valiant efforts to festoon and illuminate their homes and yards just as they did last year and the year before. (Rumor has it that Regis and Ken now use voice commands to turn their lights on and off!)

Two ways, then, in which we can participate together in boosting our collective spirits:

First: **If you have a creche or an Advent Wreath in your home** (especially if you used one of our Advent Wreath kits to get started!), **take a picture of it** (with or without yourselves in the shot) and send the image to me at austover@gmail.com and to Joyce Donadee (jdjdonadee@gmail.com) *Be aware that she and I plan to use the resulting gallery of pictures in some celebratory way on our Web site, on our Facebook page, and/or in our streaming services over Christmastide. Naturally, we will include no names or other identifying information—just the images themselves.*

Second: Look elsewhere in this Little Log for information about how **we can all contribute to the tradition of "greening the church"—that is, decorating the sanctuary at St. Brendan's for Christmastide.** We all long to celebrate the coming of the Christ Child with poinsettias and evergreens, so even if we can witness the display only over Zoom, let's make sure we have the resources to "do it up right."



Friends, please consider making a donation of **children's hats and/or gloves for children through age 14, in urgent need.** We will take our collection to "Blessed Be Educators" www.baidos.net next week. We will extend the deadline till December 16 since we only have 2 donations so far. There is a bin outside the church waiting for your donations. Please be generous to help the many children who need our help to stay warm. Thanks so much! 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.

HOUSING: The intersection of racial justice and Covid help those in danger of being evicted because of the pandemic.

Presented by the Justice Ministry of St. Brendan's Episcopal Church and the Pittsburgh Union of Regional Renters



Tuesday, December 15, at 7:00 pm via Zoom Thousands of people have lost their jobs, been furloughed or had their hours cut as a result of the COVID-19 crisis and are having trouble paying their rent. Many people right here in this area are at risk of being evicted. There are as many as 200 hearings a day scheduled for evictions in Allegheny County. The moratorium which allows people to stay in their homes expires on December 31 and help is not immediately available. For a family to go to court to fight an eviction, it may involve additional fees and money that they do not have.

The Justice Ministry of St. Brendan's Episcopal Church is sponsoring an educational Forum on Tuesday, December 15, at 7:00 pm via Zoom, featuring an advocacy group (PURR – Pittsburgh Union of Regional Renters) which helps renters. This Forum will also include a fundraising event to raise money to be used for renters in danger of being evicted to help with court filing fees, rent etc.

If you would like to attend, please email St. Brendan's at stbrendans@comcast.net, and you will be sent a Zoom invitation.

This is one of those rare opportunities where we can make a real difference in people's lives!



The Haitian project. There are now two school buses in Pittsburgh that are being packed up to go to Miami and then on a boat to Haiti. Thank you for all of the donations that came from Brendanites and people in the community. Some of the clothing, shoes, and other items are still being counted and sorted. Donations are still being accepted to help to fill the second bus. Keep them coming!!!

We want more books!

Prisoners at Allegheny County Jail are not able to receive books directly anymore, however, ACJ will be accepting book donations for their library until Dec 28, 2020.

Paperbacks preferred!

Magazines like: National Geographic, the New Yorker, gossip mags, fashion and beauty, etc.

Books like: self-help, mystery/thriller, sci-fi, novels, poetry, comics, etc.

Anything, except for:

Violent imagery, including weapons, drugs/paraphernalia.

Drop off Locations:

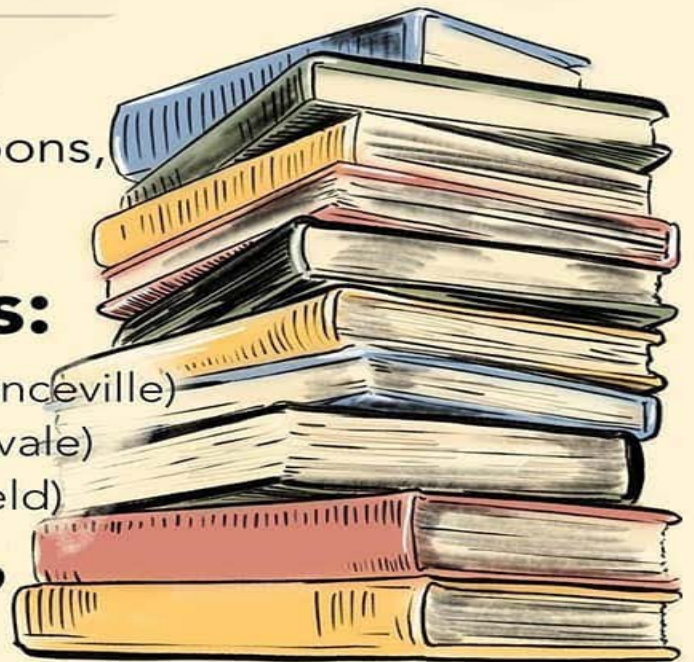
Black Cat Tattoo 3439 Butler (lawrenceville)

Pageboy Salon 420 North Ave (millvale)

The Big Idea 4812 Liberty (bloomfield)

Questions, or to arrange pick up

Call: (412) 376-5168



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
Brenna Conroy
Andrea Dickerson
Rebecca Donadee
Lynne Gloor
Kerri Jensen
Warren Sands
Julie

Maddie Bell
Adele Cotter
Franklin Park Police Department
Amanda Gagnon
Ann Hockenberry
Dr. Ken Judson
Andrew Smith
Mike

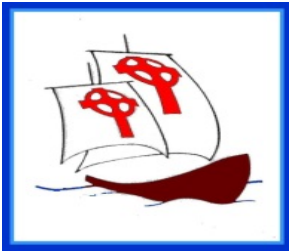
Kate Burnett
James Cotter
Jeff Gagnon
Beth Lutz Hoffman
Luke O'Neill
Justin Zeigler
Patrick

Frank Casey
Laura Dugan Demers
Franklin Park Volunteer Fire Department
Shelley Gagnon
Eric Hood
Kim Pierce
Cindy

Bob Cerra
Nicholas Demers
Betsy Gentile
John Jacobs and staff
Becca Sands
Jennifer



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