

# PARISH UPDATE

2405 Clearview Drive • Glenshaw, PA 15116 • 412-486-5171 (phone) • 412-487-4520 (fax) www. • churchworthfinding.org

## NEWS & NOTES

### DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2..... William Trischler
- 5..... Amy Klym
- 12..... Linda Ross
- 14..... Doris Neiger
- 17..... Jeanne Workman
- 18..... Robin Perry
- 22..... Kathy Walzer
- 25..... Patricia Parker
- 29..... Dody Edge

### Craft Sale a Success

Once again our annual African craft sale was a great success. Thanks to all of you who bought jewelry, carved wooden animals, and all the other wonderful items. We raised \$473.00 for African Team Ministries, another new sales record. African Team Ministries provides Anglican Dioceses all over Africa with training for laity, aid to refugees, support for orphans, clean water, medical care, and repairing churches. There are brochures in the undercroft on the table under our mission poster for anyone wanting to learn more about their ministry.

### Shepherd's Heart Homeless and Disabled Veterans Benefit to be held on December 6

Shepherd's Heart Fellowship in Uptown, a parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, will be holding their second annual Benefit for Homeless and Disabled Veterans on Thursday, Dec. 6, at Cefalo's in Carnegie.

Shepherd's Heart operates the Shepherd's Heart Veterans Home, a transitional housing facility for homeless veterans. The Veterans Home, at 13 Pride Street, can house as many as ten veterans at any given time. It is a collaborative effort of Pittsburgh Veterans Affairs Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV), Comprehensive Homeless Center (CHC) and Shepherd's Heart Fellowship. The collaboration aims to achieve a continuum of care for homeless veterans. There are approximately 1,500 homeless veterans on any given night in Allegheny County.

The event, which will feature autograph signing by Pittsburgh sports personalities including former Steeler Craig Wolfley and former Pirates Steve Blass and Elroy Face, begins at 6:30 pm. Appetizers, beverages and music will also be provided. Tickets are \$25. Call the Shepherd's Heart Veterans Home at 412-281-1305 to order tickets or request more information. Cefalo's is located at 428 Washington Avenue in Carnegie.

## Parish Update

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## Rector's Message:

### Chaplain to the Senate, how surreal

Dear friends,

I don't think I've ever used the word "surreal" before and, frankly, I've never responded well when others have used it. I just don't like the word. However, recently I had an experience that I believe fits the definition of a "strange or dreamlike" experience and I want to share it with you, along with a special prayer.



*Fr. Martin with Lieutenant Governor Katherine Baker Knoll and State Senator Jane Ori.*

First, some background. When I was in college my mom gave me a book entitled, "A man called Peter." It was a biography about the late Presbyterian minister, Dr. Peter Marshall, who immigrated to the US from Scotland, got ordained, and eventually became the Chaplain to the United States Senate. It was a tremendous book and the story of Peter Marshall's life as a minister had a profound influence on my calling to the priesthood. Images of the movie of the same title still surface in my mind.

A few months ago I received a form letter from Senator Jane Ori's office inviting me (and others, I'm sure) to be the guest

Chaplain for the State Senate for a session. Thinking it was somewhat of a civic duty, and a patriotic experience I would enjoy, I put my name in the hat and later scheduled my day in Harrisburg. This past week I donned my dark suit and white Anglican collar and made the trip.

The surreal part came when I walked (was escorted) onto the Senate Chamber floor amidst the one hundred year old, original mahogany desks, imported marble walls, oil painted, canvas murals, and two-ton hanging chandeliers and took my high-back seat below the Lieutenant Governor. The gavel came down, the senators rose and stood beside their desks, and I was introduced to say the prayer. It wasn't the US Senate and I wasn't permanent chaplain but the feeling was certainly "dreamlike." I introduced the senators to our Anglican forefather, Thomas Cranmer, and read to them the following of his many beautiful collects:

**Continued on next page**

## DEC Calendar of Events

### WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

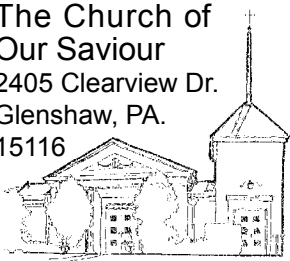
- Sunday .....9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I  
.....10:00 a.m. Adult Education  
11:00 a.m. Contemporary Service w/Sunday School  
Family Service the first Sunday of the month w/o Sunday school
- Tuesday ..... 6:30 p.m. Intercessory Prayer Time
- Last Thursday of the month .....Healing Service and Lunch 12:00 noon
- Every other Thursday ..... Brownies 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

### SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER

- Sunday, December 2..... Baby Bottles and Angel Tree are due
- Monday, December 3 ..... Finance Meeting
- Monday, December 10..... Vestry meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, December 15 ..... Martin's Christmas open house 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
- Sunday, December 16..... Children's Pageant, church decorating & Greens lunch
- Sunday, December 23..... Lesson and Carols at the 11:00 a.m. service
- Monday, December 24..... Christmas Eve Services at 4:30 p.m. & 11:00 p.m.

Please pray for the all the parishioners and friends of Church of Our Saviour

The Church of  
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**Rector's Message continued**

O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men: Grant unto thy people that they may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Thomas Cranmer surely didn't anticipate his prayer being read 450 years later in the Capital Building in the state of Pennsylvania, but his theology and biblical understanding of human nature has proved to be timeless. Throughout human history no king, no government, no institution, no amount of education, or wealth, or power has been able to bring into order the unruly wills and affections of the sinful human nature; it's just too hard to control. Cranmer knew from scripture, and his own experience, that none of us have anything "in ourselves that can help ourselves." And so he prays, and leads us to pray, to the only One who can save us from self destruction; Jesus Christ our Lord, who can and does reorder the human heart that has bowed before Him, so that it might love the thing that God commands and desire what He promises. That's why we call Him "Savior."

This Advent season, may we all rejoice and prepare our hearts anew to receive the King of kings and Lord of lords, Jesus Christ, who was sent into the world to bear the iniquity of us all and turn our unruly hearts into ones that love him with the "greatest affection." That's not surreal, that's a rock solid promise. May God grant us the faith to believe it.

Merry Christmas,  
joseph

**NEWS & NOTES**

**Greens Brunch/Children's Pageant**

Sometimes the Christmas season can get so hectic we think we just can't do one more thing. But what is that "one more thing" that needs to be eliminated? Maybe a trip to the mall but, hopefully, not the Greens Brunch and church decorating Sunday. This special Sunday, along with the Children's Christmas pageant, is a great time to fellowship together, put up some decorations, and enjoy some hearty soup together. This year, amidst the hustle, let's slow down and enjoy one another in the fellowship of Christ, Sunday December 16 at 11 am.

**6th Annual Martin Open House**

Everyone is invited to the Rectory on Saturday, December 15 from 6:00 – 9:00 pm for food and Christmas cheer as we celebrate the Savior at our sixth annual gathering. Drop in for a short time or stay for a while; we'll keep the fire burning.

**The Story of the REAL Santa Clause**

The true story of Santa Claus begins with Nicholas, who was born during the third century in the village of Patara. At the time the area was Greek and is now on the southern coast of Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus' words to "sell what you own and give the money to the poor," Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to the those in need, his love for children, and his concern for sailors and ships.

Under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, who ruthlessly persecuted Christians, Bishop Nicholas suffered for his faith, was exiled and imprisoned. The prisons were so full of bishops, priests, and deacons, there was no room for the real criminals-murderers, thieves and robbers. After his release, Nicholas attended the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. He died December 6, AD 343 in Myra and was buried in his cathedral church, where a unique relic, called manna, formed in his grave. This liquid substance, said to have healing powers, fostered the growth of devotion to Nicholas. The anniversary of his death became a day of celebration, St. Nicholas Day.

Through the centuries many stories and legends have been told of St. Nicholas' life and deeds. These accounts help us understand his extraordinary character and why he is so beloved and revered as protector and helper of those in need.

Many stories tell of Nicholas saving his people from famine, sparing the lives of those innocently accused, and much more. He did many kind and generous deeds in secret, expecting nothing in return. Within a century of his death he was celebrated as a saint. Today he is venerated in the East as wonder, or miracle worker and in the West as patron of a great variety of persons-children, mariners, bankers, pawn-brokers, scholars, orphans, laborers, travelers, merchants, judges, paupers, marriageable maidens, students, children, sailors, victims of judicial mistakes, captives,

perfumers, even thieves and murderers! He is known as the friend and protector of all in trouble or need.

Sailors, claiming St. Nicholas as patron, carried stories of his favor and protection far and wide. St. Nicholas chapels were built in many seaports. As his popularity spread during the Middle Ages, he became the patron saint of Apulia (Italy), Sicily, Greece, and Lorraine (France), and many cities in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Russia, Belgium, and the Netherlands (See list). Following his baptism in Constantinople, Vladimir I of Russia brought St. Nicholas' stories and devotion to St. Nicholas to his homeland where Nicholas became the most beloved saint. Nicholas was so widely revered that more than 2,000 churches were named for him, including three hundred in Belgium, thirty-four in Rome, twenty-three in the Netherlands and more than four hundred in England.

Through the centuries St. Nicholas has continued to be venerated by Catholics and Orthodox and honored by Protestants. By his example of generosity to those in need, especially children, St. Nicholas continues to be a model for the compassionate life.

Widely celebrated in Europe, St. Nicholas' feast day, December 6th, kept alive the stories of his goodness and generosity. In Germany and Poland, boys dressed as bishops begged alms for the poor-and sometimes for themselves! In the Netherlands and Belgium, St. Nicholas arrived on a steamship from Spain to ride a white horse on his gift-giving rounds. December 6th is still the main day for gift giving and merrymaking in much of Europe. For example, in the Netherlands St. Nicholas is celebrated on the 5th, the eve of the day, by sharing candies (thrown in the door), chocolate initial letters, small gifts, and riddles. Dutch children leave carrots and hay in their shoes for the saint's horse, hoping St. Nicholas will exchange them for small gifts. Simple gift-giving in early Advent helps preserve a Christmas Day focus on the Christ Child.

*From the St. Nicholas Center: for more info visit online at [www.stnicholascenter.org](http://www.stnicholascenter.org).*

**A thought to ponder**

The Christian Church does not expect everyone to walk in lock step with every doctrine perfectly articulated and every behavior well under control. There are, however, certain foundational elements of the faith, certain "parameters" outside of which, beliefs cease to be Christian.