

# PARISH UPDATE

A Monthly Newsletter for Friends and Members of Church of Our Saviour Parish  
 2405 Clearview Drive • Glenshaw, PA 15116 • 412-486-5171 (phone) • 412-487-4520 (fax)

## NEWS & NOTES

### DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2.....Bill Trischler
- 14.....Doris Neiger
- 18.....Robin Perry
- 22.....Kathy Walzer
- 25.....Pat Parker
- 29.....Dorothy Edge (Dodie)
- 31.....Ernie Bold
- 31.....Hannah Acquafondata

### Out of Africa

Our annual African craft sale was a great success again this year. Thanks to all of you who bought jewelry, carved wooden animals, and all the other wonderful items. We raised \$371.00 for African Team Ministries, bettering our sales from last year.

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 for anyone wanting to learn more about their ministry.

### Our Missionaries (an update)

Margarita Grachen continues to work toward her goal of building a daycare center and orphanage in Honduras. The daycare center construction is expected to be complete by December 15.

Frank B. was here from Tunisia to attend the Hope and a Future conference and spoke at both services and the adult ed. group on November 13. He and his wife continue their language learning, relationship building, learning the culture, and church planting. They have several new Christians that they meet with and are discipling.

Please keep all our mission partners in your prayers.

### Ministry Training

There will be a training session following the 10:30 Sunday worship service for anyone interested in becoming a licensed Lay Eucharistic Visitor. Anyone who is interested in becoming part of a visitation team to take the sacrament of Holy Communion to shut-ins is also invited to attend

This ministry extends our celebration of the Eucharist to those members of our parish who are no longer able to make it to church, but who are part of the fellowship of saints in this place. By taking out Communion to them following the Sunday service, we include them in our worship celebration and extend to them the blessing of participating with us in the celebration of the peace with God through the Body and Blood of Christ.

## Message From the Rector:

### Advent is Upon Us!

Dear friends,

We often hear (mainly from rectors) how the seasons of the church year like Advent and Lent can draw us closer to God and deepen our faith as we apply ourselves to helpful spiritual disciplines such as reading devotionals, praying, fasting, and so on. These are all good tools and as the Lord leads I pray we will all take advantage of them, but this rector has to admit, the life changing enlightenment that took place during Advent 2004 was far beyond his miniscule efforts to achieve it.

It was the annual Advent clergy quiet day and the leader of the meditative time away was the new dean of Trinity School for Ministry, the Very Rev. Dr. Paul Zahl (don't let the title throw you, he's really quite normal). All I did was show up and since I didn't take any notes I can't remember exactly what was said, but when I walked out of that church two well known Christian truths had been distinctly magnified and profoundly awakened in my heart and mind.

The first foundational, Biblical truth that came alive that day was the awareness of the on-going, ever disturbing, absolutely depraved condition of human nature that lives at the core of every living being, both Christian AND non-Christian alike. For many believers in Christ, we somehow got the impression that when we believed in Jesus and received the Holy Spirit that the process had begun to gradually eliminate or even exterminate that ugly sin nature that once ran roughshod over our life. We thought that now that we were Christians we would be free from the bad thoughts and actions that plagued our non-Christian life and now we would be

more holy and Christ-like. Some of us are still waiting, and although sincere transformation does take place, we're relieved to be reminded that sincere Christians, like the apostle Paul, still "do the things we hate, and the good we want to do we don't do." This awareness greatly reduces any tendency to judge ourselves and others too harshly.

The second insight and the great relief from the first insight was simply the reinforcement of the glorious good news of the Gospel of Christ; namely, that "holiness" and "Christ-likeness" is totally and sufficiently provided for by the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Neither good behavior nor shortcomings affect the right standing we have before God once we believe the gospel in our heart. This belief and assurance of God's favor "takes the pressure off" and allows us to serve and follow Jesus out of gratitude instead of fear, out of joy instead of duty, and out of love instead of law, flaws and all, our righteousness based on Christ alone, not the sprucing up of our human nature. What a relief!

This Advent, may the Lord's light shine anew in our darkness and remind us of the glorious gift of grace provided to us through the coming of Christ in the world and his one time sacrifice on the cross for our sins. Rejoice, rejoice!

Merry Christmas,  
Joseph



*Joseph*

## DEC Calendar of Events

### WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

- Sunday ..... 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I  
 9:15 a.m. Adult Education  
 10:00 a.m. Contemporary Music Practice  
 10:30 a.m. Family Service & Children's Ministries
- Tuesday ..... 6:00 p.m. Intercessory Prayer Time
- Wednesdays ..... 12:00 noon Healing Service and Lunch
- Thursdays ..... 6:00 -7:30 p.m. Brownies meet bi-weekly
- Saturdays ..... 7:30 a.m. Men's Group the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday

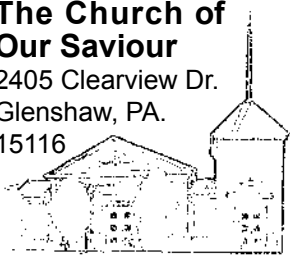
### SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER

- Saturday December 17 ..... Martin's Christmas open house 6 – 9 p.m.  
 Everyone welcome!
- Sunday December 18 ..... Lesson and Carols, Children's Pageant,  
 Church decorating & Greens Lunch
- Saturday December 24 ..... Services of Holy Eucharist at 4:30 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.
- Sunday December 25 ..... Holy Eucharist - Rite I at 9:30 a.m.

Please pray for the all the parishioners in the bulletin.

## The Church of Our Saviour

2405 Clearview Dr.  
Glenshaw, PA.  
15116



### For More Information:

Office: 412-486-5171 • Fax: 412-487-4520 • Email: [coosglenshaw@juno.com](mailto:coosglenshaw@juno.com) • website: [www.churchworthfinding.org](http://www.churchworthfinding.org)

# Advent – A Season of Waiting by Kathy Walzer

Happy New Year! O, you thought that was next month, didn't you? Well, the Christian liturgical year begins with the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent. So we have begun Year B in our three-year Sunday lectionary cycle, Year 2 in our daily lectionary readings. Advent is the beginning of the Church year because, like the long history of God's people from Creation onwards, it represents the waiting for the salvation of God. So what are we waiting for in Advent?

The word "advent" means "coming". Coming implies an in-between state on a journey already started but not yet completed. An arrival is pending. It's on its way. When we expect the arrival of someone or something, it may be with anticipation or dread or indifference. And our attitude towards the arrival will affect the way we prepare for it.

The King is coming! Do we await Him eagerly or fearfully or cluelessly? Our level of anticipation will reflect our relationship to God and be reflected in our preparation for His coming.

The people of Israel waited and waited and prayed and prayed through the long years of exile in Babylon and, after the return from the exile, through oppression and rule by each successive empire (Persian, Greek, Hasmonian, Roman). They waited and prayed for the coming of the Messiah and the restoration of their freedom, a new deliverance from oppression and slavery. Isaiah prophesied a "new thing" that God would do, something to astonish not only Israel but the nations. That "new thing" was so astonishing that most of God's people missed it completely! Emmanuel (God with us) came to His own people and "his own people did not receive Him." (John 1:11) Jesus (God's

salvation) came to make atonement once and for all time for the sins of the whole world. This astonishing entrance of God into His world in the Incarnation is what we celebrate at Christmas.

Gradually the Church began to prepare for Christmas, in the same way it prepares for Easter with a season set apart for prayer and fasting, a penitential season to prepare for the great feast day of the Nativity. So Advent celebrates the coming of the King! King Jesus came as a humble baby born in Bethlehem



and was crowned with thorns in His earthly reign from the Cross – "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Is. 53:3) who "bore our sins in His own body on the tree" (I Pet. 2:24). But He is coming once again to set all things right, to complete the work of restoration that He began in His creation and bring God's justice to light. Jesus reigns today in His Church through the Holy Spirit. We acknowledge Him as Lord, but painfully aware that much of the world does not. At His return, He will establish the rule of God over the whole of creation.

So, in Advent, we celebrate the coming of our King in the Incarnation as Jesus the Messiah, the Christ who was born into the

world. We also celebrate and anticipate and prepare for His coming again in glory to judge both the living and the dead, the Kingdom which will have no end.. Do you love His appearing? Do you wait and pray with longing for His coming again? Or are you fearful of His return as judge of all the earth? Or do you not expect Him at all?

God does not keep us in suspense. He wants us to be sure of our salvation. "Perfect love casts out fear." (I John 4:18) If Christ is enthroned as Lord in our hearts, we will receive Him with joy as His loyal subjects. If we know that our sins have been covered and that we are cleansed by the blood of His cross, then we know also there is "no longer any condemnation for those who are in Christ". (Rom. 8:1) Therefore, we will pray and work to finish the mission He has given us in order to prepare for and hasten His return. We can't wait to see Him enthroned in glory!

Waiting is the normal state of the Christian life. We wait for God's guidance, for answers to prayer, for God's salvation to be appropriated by those we love. But we wait in hope and expectation because our eyes have seen the salvation of our God in the face of Jesus Christ. The victory is won! The King is coming! He reigns now and we a sign to the world of His grace, of His love, and of His reign. "While you wait, preach the gospel", Archbishop Henry Orombi of Uganda told a TESM student last year on His visit to Pittsburgh. This Advent may we also be witnesses for the gospel, a light in the darkness, while we wait for the King who was, and is, and is to come. And may we enter into our celebration of the Incarnation of Christ this Christmas season with a renewed commitment to see Jesus "known, worshiped and obeyed to the ends of the earth". Amen.

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## Photos from the Hope and a Future Conference

