



Almighty and gracious Father, we give you thanks for the fruits of the earth in their season and for the labors of those who harvest them. Make us, we pray, faithful stewards of your great bounty, for the provision of our necessities and the relief of all who are in need, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Collect for Thanksgiving Day, BCP Page 246

November 22, 2023



St. Thomas, Oakmont, Church Hosts Advent Procession with the Ambrose Romanos Singers

The season before Christmas can be a hectic and busy time, sometimes filled with anxiety and rushing, pushing out the joy and serenity that the carols seem to promise.

Start this December with an evening of heavenly music and peaceful prayer. The Ambrose Romanos Singers, a choir that sings music both from Eastern Byzantine and Western Christian traditions, comes to **St. Thomas Church at 4 p.m. on Sunday, December 3**, to lead an Advent Procession to welcome the season. Named for St. Ambrose of Milan and St. Romanos, known as the “Melodist” or “Sweet-Singer”, this choir of men and women was formed in 2001, led by J. Michael Thompson, and has been singing at various churches in Pittsburgh ever since.



The Advent Procession begins at 4 p.m. inside of the church. Afterward, there will be a reception to welcome the choir and guests who come. This visit by the choir begins a year of various events celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the parish in 2024.

[St. Thomas Episcopal Church](#), 378 Delaware Avenue, Oakmont, PA 15139



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2023, AT 7:30 P.M.



Pittsburgh's only complete
performance of the
beloved oratorio

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

Alan Lewis directs the Calvary Choir, soloists



Sarah Nadler Raquel Winnica Guy Russo Edward Vogel
and a period-instruments ensemble anchored by

*Chatham
Baroque*

\$20 suggested donation

CALVARY
EPISCOPAL CHURCH



315 Shady Avenue, East Liberty 15206 | www.calvarypgh.org



Welcome: Getting to Know The Rev. Marjorie Bevans



The Rev. Marjorie Bevans was welcomed as the new rector at St. Michaels of the Valley Episcopal Church Ligonier, PA on August 1st, 2023. When asked about her experience at St. Michaels thus far, the Rev. Marjorie Bevans expressed: "Oh, it's just been wonderful! I really am so grateful to be here. People have been so sweet and friendly, so supportive and patient with me as I'm taking my time getting to know people. They let me have the time I need to take care of the transitional things, which was a blessing."

Mother Marjorie majored in philosophy at the University of Virginia and attended seminary at Nashotah House in Wisconsin. She has served as an Episcopal priest for 23 years, the last 12 of which have been as Rector of Good Shepherd Episcopal Church in Parkersburg, West Virginia. Throughout her life and ministry, Mother Marjorie has also

had a passion Christian apologetics as well as a love for the outdoors both of which are expressed in ways that connect people to God and one another.

[Read more about Mother Marjorie on the diocesan website here.](#)



Serviam Online Learning Pilot Continues



Serviam Institute
I Will Serve.

Sign up now to access free content from the Diocese of Pennsylvania!

In May, dozens of people from throughout our diocese began using Serviam, an online learning platform made available by the Diocese of Pennsylvania as part of their pilot expansion program. Our pilot period is scheduled to end on February 15, 2024. But don't worry; that's still plenty of time to join. This is your opportunity to access quality, Episcopal-specific online content, completely free of charge!

- Are you serving on your parish's vestry, or just wondering, What's a vestry? ... Take Serviam's "Vestry 101" course. Or, for a deeper dive, check out "Canonical and Legal Responsibilities of a Vestry."
- Want to go deeper in your spirituality? Explore "An Introduction to Spiritual Direction" or "An Introduction to Pilgrimage."
- Other courses include:
 - An Introduction to Clergy Transitions,
 - Budget Basics,
 - Evaluating Your Church's Security, and
 - Introduction to Safe Church

A "plug" for Serviam's Vestry 101

The talk around town is that Serviam's Vestry 101 course is an extremely helpful resource for rookie and veteran vestry members alike. Here's what Jane Parkhurst, Senior Warden of St. Andrew's, Highland Park, had to say about the course.

"Serviam's Vestry 101 is a great tool, not only for wardens, but for all vestry members. The areas of responsibility are clearly explained, in easy to understand language, with applicable rules and guidelines. But Serviam's Vestry 101 is more than an educational tool. It is an amazing gift from the Diocese to all of us. It is designed so every vestry can succeed. Regardless of the size of the parish, income from stewardship, or age of your parishioners, if you follow the guidelines set forth in Serviam, you are on the right path for your church, physically and spiritually, to lead your church in a positive direction for the future."

If your parish has its annual meeting in January, such that it's nearly time to begin recruiting new vestry members, remember that you can refer candidates with no vestry experience to these courses in Serviam. It would be a great way of helping them to understand their potential new role and to equip them for it.

Sign up to participate in our Serviam pilot group

Sign up now to join our Pittsburgh pilot group. Within a few days, you will receive instructions on how to access Serviam and begin your online learning experience.

Sign Up for Serviam Pilot

To help make this pilot as helpful as possible to our friends in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, all participants will be asked to provide feedback through brief, easy-to-use online forms, both on the specific courses completed and on the Serviam experience in general. Your participation and feedback will be greatly appreciated!



Spooky Success and Exciting Endeavors at Holy Cross, Homewood

Despite the inclement weather trying to cast a gloomy spell, the annual Halloween Trunk or Treat, shifted to the indoor space at the Church of the Holy Cross and was nothing short of outstanding. Dozens of costumed children and their families, undeterred by the weather, enjoyed the fun trick-or-treat gathering in Homewood.



The highlight of the event was, of course, the little trick-or-treaters, who were greeted with an abundance of candy and treats, thanks to the efforts of many dedicated parishioners and some volunteers from the Holy Cross Early Childhood Exploration Committee who worked their magic to spread Halloween cheer as they passed out candy, stickers, and books.



But the magic doesn't stop there! The Early Childhood Exploration Committee at Holy Cross has set their sights on an exciting venture for 2024—a weekly Parent's Day Out Program for children aged 18 months through five years. This new ministry for young children aims to foster a love of learning while building social-emotional competence in a nurturing environment while offering parents a well-deserved or needed break.

The committee is calling upon the talents and enthusiasm of the wider diocesan community! If you find yourself interested or available to contribute to the planning and implementation of this heartwarming ministry, we invite you to join our efforts. For those interested, please contact Eileen Sharbaugh at sharbaugh@verizon.net.



Your involvement will undoubtedly make a positive impact on the lives of young children and their families.



Save the Date: House Blessing at the Abbey



The Abbey of St. Nicholas house blessing will take place on the **Feast of St. Nicholas, December 6 at 6 p.m.** The Church of the Advent and the Abbey of St. Nicholas are located at 3010 Pioneer Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15226.

The Abbey can be found on the web at saintnicksabbey.org and can be contacted at saintnicksabbey@gmail.com.



Winter Offerings from the Stevenson School for Ministry

Stevenson School for Ministry will offer the following courses in the Winter term for continuing education. All courses are offered via Zoom, with online resource support and conversation. These courses can easily be registered for on the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania [Eventbrite page](#) or through the separate links listed below. Contact ssfm@diocesepa.org for more information.



There's a Voice in the Wilderness: An Advent Wreath of Hymns
Wednesdays, 12-1pm
November 29, December 6, 13, 20
The Rev. Becky Zartman, Instructor

The music and hymns of Advent are hauntingly beautiful. In these four sessions, we'll explore the history, theology and scripture so embedded within these lyrics and tunes. [Register here!](#)



How to Pray: Four Christian Practices of Prayer
Wednesdays, 7-8 p.m.
January 17, 24, 31, and February 7
The Rev. Dr. Luke Zerra, instructor

Scripture counsels Christians to pray without ceasing. However, finding a practice of prayer that works, that draws us closer to God, can be difficult. This series will explore four Christians practices of prayer. We will explore the scriptural, historical, and theological underpinnings of each form of prayer and then have a chance to pray together using the practice. The goal of this series is not only informational, but practical. [Register here!](#)



Around the Diocese



Bishop Ketlen's Visitation Schedule:

November 26: St. Andrew's, Highland Park

December 3: Advent, Jeannette

December 10: St. James, Penn Hills

December 17: Atonement, Carnegie

December 24: Advent, Brookline (a.m.)

December 24: Trinity Cathedral (Christmas Eve)

Parish leadership is reminded to complete and submit [this form](#) at least two weeks in advance of their visitation.

To schedule time with Bishop Ketlen, contact Andrea Rath at 412-721-0853, ext. 251, or arath@episcopalpgh.org.

The **Cycle of Prayer** for December 2023 – August 2024 is now [available here](#).

Bishop Ketlen's **Visitation Schedule** for December 2023 – June 2024 is [available here](#).



Parting Shots



The Rev. Nancy Threadgill, priest in charge of St. Mark's, Johnstown, received the Ed Cernic Sr. Community Support Recognition Award from Conemaugh Valley Veterans President John Brown during The Salvation Army Corps of Johnstown's annual Veterans Appreciation Luncheon at the Richland Township Fire Department banquet hall on Thursday, Nov. 16, 2023. More about the luncheon in the Tribune Democrat [here](#).



On Sunday, November 5, St. Matthew's, Homestead, celebrated the confirmation of Kelly Gregory.



On Sunday, November 19, Bishop Ketlen confirmed 7 and received 14 new Episcopalians at St. Paul's in Mt. Lebanon.



Bishop Ketlen and the Christian Leaders Fellowship, an ecumenical group of local bishops and denominational leaders, led a prayer service at the annual dedication of the Pittsburgh Crèche, on Friday, November 17 in the plaza in front of US Steel Tower on Grant Street, Downtown. This marked the 25th anniversary of the creche.



Has your parish been featured in the news?
Please let us know via email at info@episcopalpgh.org