



December 19, 2023

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's 2023 Christmas Message: 'A sign for you'

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has released his annual Christmas message saying that he is grateful for all of the prayers as he recovers from his latest surgery.

Curry underwent emergency surgery on Dec. 4 after doctors diagnosed a subdural hematoma, or brain bleed, that he suffered after falling during a visit to the Diocese of Central New York. He has since been released from the hospital in Raleigh, North Carolina, where he lives.



In his Christmas message, Curry said he was doing well and is “ever more aware of the power of the messages of Advent to watch, to wait, and to listen to the pregnant voice of silence.”

[Watch the video or read the transcript here.](#)

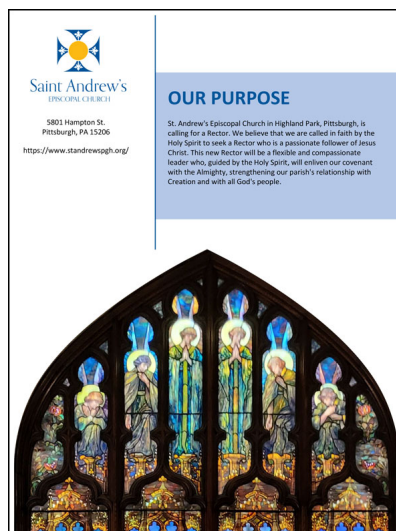


St. Andrew's Launches Search for Next Rector

St. Andrew's, Highland Park, is searching for its next priest. View the [Rector Search section of the parish's website](#) for more information, including a comprehensive parish profile.

St. Andrew's Discernment Committee will be accepting applications through February 12, 2024. Questions about the position may be directed to the Discernment Committee Chair, Jodie Moore, at search@standrewspgh.org, or to Canon Kim Karashin at kkarashin@episcopalpgh.org.

If you know of any qualified clergy who may be interested in discerning a call to St. Andrew's, please share with them this opportunity.



A Last Minute Gift Idea from the Bookstore at Calvary

Taking a religious twist on Monopoly, which remains the most popular board game played by families at Christmas, is Episcopopoly.

Borrowing from Monopoly's theme, players move around the board with game pieces which include a bishop's hat, a chalice, and a Bible. Properties are Episcopalian churches from across the country. A church offering is required for any player landing on a property if they don't own, and if a cathedral is erected on a property, more offerings are required. The game is won when a player builds a cathedral with the highest possible steeple.



Episcopopoly is available at the [Calvary Bookstore](#) for \$25! Enjoy with family and friends or give as a fun gift.

The Bookstore is open on Sunday from 8:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Call the Bookstore at 412-661-0120 ext. 133 (please leave a message) or email at bookstore@calvarypgh.org and we will contact you. Cash, check, Discover®, MasterCard®, and Visa® along with touch-free payments are accepted.



Longest Night Service in Oakmont Thursday, December 21 at 7 p.m.

It is hard to join in the rejoicing and happiness at Christmas when your own heart is broken. For some, especially touched by loss or grief or depression, it is too hard a challenge to connect to the joy and celebration so many others seem to experience at the holidays.



On the longest night of the year, December 21, St. Thomas, Oakmont, will offer a simple and muted worship instead of a triumphal and joyous celebration. The focus will be how God carries us when our lives are broken with sadness.

If you have lost a loved one or if you find it difficult to join in the loud celebration then come for a quiet evening worship with prayer and music and a short homily. "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:5)

[St. Thomas Episcopal Church](#), 78 Delaware Avenue, Oakmont,

PA 15139



Diocesan Transitions

New Calls

The Rev. William (Biff) Carpenter has accepted the call to be the Priest-in-Charge at the Church of the Advent, Brookline, and is serving as Abbey Missioner at the newly formed Abbey of St. Nicholas. He most recently served as the Priest-in-Charge at St. Francis in the Fields, Somerset.

The Rev. Neil K. Raman has accepted a new call to serve as Rector of Grace Church in Haddonfield, NJ, in the Diocese of New Jersey, starting in mid-January. Neil+ previous served as Senior Associate Rector at Calvary, East Liberty, and as President of the Standing Committee.

Appointments

Jane Delano of St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon, has been appointed by Bishop Ketlen to serve a three-year term on the Board of Trustees beginning on January 1, 2024.



Blue Christmas Service in Johnstown

Thursday, December 21 at 6 p.m.

In-person and online

At St. Mark's, the Blue Christmas Service is traditionally held on the longest night of the year.

This liturgy is a quiet meditative service especially for those for whom the Christmas season is a profoundly sad and lonely time, a reminder of loss and brokenness. The death or impending death of a loved one, loss of health or employment, family crises, separation or divorce, and depression are some of the many reasons that Christmas can be painful and isolating.



Our lighting of candles during the service offers an opportunity for remembrance, reflection, prayer and spiritual healing. One can grieve knowing they are not alone and be comforted and strengthened by the love of Christ and those present.

A light shines in the darkness. Come for yourself, for someone you love or for those who suffer around the world.

[St. Mark's Episcopal Church](#), 335 Locust Street, downtown Johnstown PA 15905

For additional information, contact the Reverend Nancy Threadgill at revnancy-stmarks@atlanticbbn.net or 814- 535-6797.



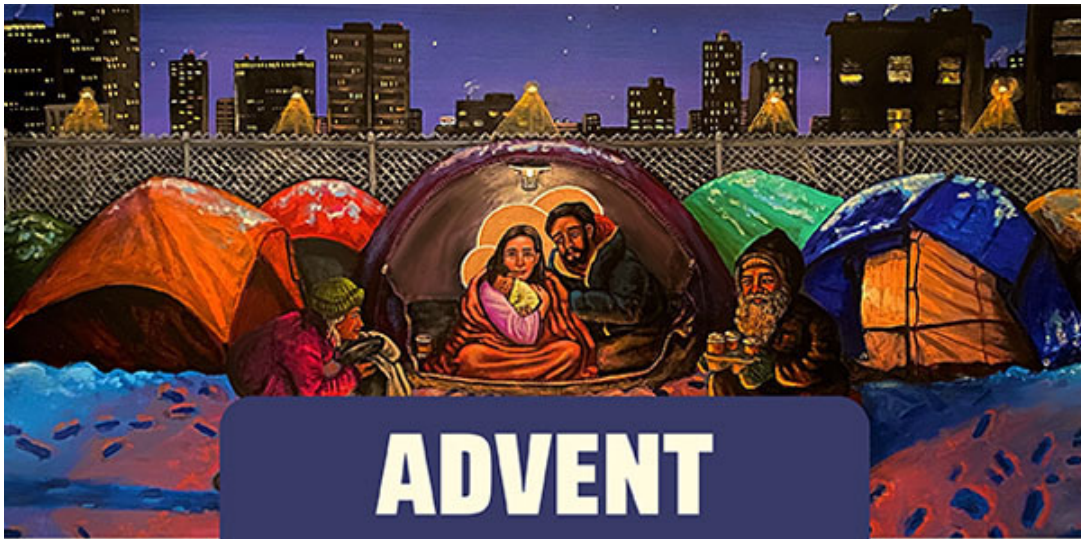
The LONGEST *Night*

On the longest night of the year, we will gather for a candlelight service of contemplative prayer and Holy Eucharist. It is time to reflect, to recall, and to be still during a busy season.

DECEMBER 21 • 7:00 PM

TRINITY
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ADVENT OUTREACH

Trinity Cathedral Walk-In Ministry Winter Supply Drive

- Blankets: warm, thick, robust material, adult full size
- Sleeping Bags
- Hand and Foot Warmers

outreach@trinitycathedralpgh.org

Please call the Cathedral at 412-232-6404 x156 to arrange a drop-off during business hours. Pickup is also available at your parish.





[Sheldon Calvary Camp](https://www.calvarycamp.org/aboutstaff/) is now hiring for the Summer of 2024.

Visit www.calvarycamp.org/aboutstaff/



Around the Diocese



Bishop Ketlen's Visitation Schedule:

December 10: St. James, Penn Hills

December 17: Atonement, Carnegie

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

December 24: Trinity Cathedral (Christmas Eve)

January 14: St. Stephen's, McKeesport

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](#).

The **Internal Revenue Service** has issued the 2024 optional **standard mileage rates** used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes. Beginning on Jan. 1, 2024, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be:

- 67 cents per mile driven for business use, up 1.5 cents from 2023.
- 21 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes for qualified active-duty members of the Armed Forces, a decrease of 1 cent from 2023.
- 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations; the rate is set by statute and remains unchanged from 2023.

These rates apply to electric and hybrid-electric automobiles as well as gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles.



Parting Shots

An Advent Celebration in Carnegie



The wonderful folks at the Church of the Atonement in Carnegie celebrated Advent with a reception for Bishop Ketlen during her visitation on Sunday, December 17.

The Rev. Deacon Cynthia Gainer Featured in "Parson To Parson" Video Podcast



Deacon Cynthia Gainer, regular supply at St. Bartholomew's in Scottdale, was interviewed by Pastor David L. Greer from Norvelt Union Church for his "Parson to Parson" podcast on YouTube.



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

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