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July 17, 2025

## Initial Update on Diocesan Priorities

Do you know what the diocesan priorities are? This question is a favorite question Bishop Ketlen likes to ask of Vestries and congregations. In brief, our diocese has three priorities which are: Communications, Growth, and Fellowship.

How are these priorities being advanced? This initial update will give you a glimpse of what is happening behind the scene. First, the process begun with forming three teams of volunteers who were willing to commit to this work. The good news is that many said yes, and each team is meeting regularly with enthusiasm and creative energy.



### COMMUNICATIONS

The first team to be formed was the Communications Team, which is chaired by Jon Delano. This team has been meeting since January, and the group has formulated the scope of their work. For example, one of the roles of this group is to “evaluate current communications methods at the diocese and the parishes.” As such, the team has set an ambitious goal of meeting with representatives of each of our parishes to learn how they communicate both internally and externally, and to identify ways the Communications Team is able to help. These conversations are also aimed at finding out how the diocesan staff can better communicate to meet the needs of parishes.

### GROWTH

A team named Growth and Revitalization has been formed and is chaired by Bishop Ketlen. This team started to meet in May, and Canon Joann Saylor is deeply involved. A core purpose and role of this group is “to develop and propose guidelines for the varied and pertinent aspects of our growth and revitalization initiatives.” A great part of this work will include looking at specific ways to expand and support mission such as provision for New Episcopal Communities, Campus Mission strategies, and tools for parish revitalization. This effort will involve a lot of listening and discernment.

### FELLOWSHIP

The Fellowship Team, chaired by Kathy Baird, has been meeting assiduously and has already identified fun and fruitful ways to foster camaraderie around the diocese. An initiative that this group is working on is a Passport Program

designed to promote greater connections between parishes and congregations. More news will soon come about fun initiative.

Bishop Ketlen and the diocesan staff want to thank all the volunteers who have committed to serve on these teams in order to advance our diocesan priorities. We look forward to what's next!



## **Bishop Ketlen's Visitation Schedule and Cycle of Prayer for the balance of 2025 now available**

Bishop Ketlen's 2025 visitation schedule, August – December 2025, is now [available here](#).

The Diocesan Cycle of Prayer for July – December 2025, is now [available here](#).

These documents, along with many others, are available on the Diocesan website under the [Resources tab](#).



## **Holy Hikes Southwest Pennsylvania Schedule w/trails for 2025 season**

St. Michael's of the Valley, Ligonier and St. Francis in the Fields, Somerset have partnered to launch an official chapter of [Holy Hikes](#) in the Diocese, known as Holy Hikes of Southwest Pennsylvania. We piloted a series of hikes in 2024, as a way to test how the ministry would go and to understand how congregations might collaborate. After a successful initial season, we are ready to launch the ministry diocesan-wide.



The hiking season runs from May to October, although our official launch is delayed until June this year, and the hikes take place in the morning on the third Saturday of each month. We will start the hikes at 10 a.m., but some of the team will be there about 15 minutes early to welcome hikers. (If the weather is forecast to be hot, we may move the start time to 9:00 a.m. Please look for announcements on Facebook from the diocese.

The hiking schedule for 2025 is:

### **Saturday, July 19, 2025 - 10:00 am**

[Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve](#) (Latrobe) - Multiple trails making a loop - 1.5 miles easy (young family friendly)

### **Saturday, August 16, 2025 - 10:00 am**

[Johnstown Flood National Memorial](#) - Carriage Road Nature Trail - 1.15 miles - easy - with an optional .10 mile trail to the South Abutment and a .34 mile trail with lots of steps to the bottom of the dam (more difficult)

**Saturday, September 20, 2025 - 10:00 am**

[Indian Creek Valley Trail](#) - Melcroft to Indian Head section - 2.75 miles - easy

**Saturday, October 18, 2025 - 10:00 am**

Ohiopyle State Park - [Meadow Run Trail](#) - 2.9 miles - easy

[Read more about Holy Hikes Southwest Pennsylvania here.](#)



## Flea Market in Carnegie

The Church of the Atonement, 618 Washington Ave., Carnegie, is hosting a Flea-Market-on-the-Lawn on **Saturday, July 26, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.** The vendors have many useful items for sale; such as, tool accessories, drill bits, plumbing supplies, sewing machines and sewing supplies, lamps, vacuums, coffee table, dry erase boards, golf bag, head board, coin collectibles, toys, etc.



If you are interested in being a vendor to sell your flea market items, call Joyce at 412-276-0366 to save your space.



## Special Outdoor Morning Prayer St. Paul's, Kittanning Sunday, August 3, 9:30 a.m. Fort Armstrong Folk Festival



Step back to the roots of American worship with Morning Prayer from the 1789 Prayerbook—the very first Prayerbook of the fledgling United States—celebrating the same ancient rhythms of faith that nourished our earliest congregations. Held on the sun dappled lawn of St. Paul's, this service evokes the spirit of Fort Armstrong, which stood vigil on these banks just ten years earlier. Imagine the frontier soldiers pausing for devotion in 1789, and the earliest parishioners gathering not far from our current church in 1822 to give thanks and seek blessing.

- **Historic Connection:** From Fort Armstrong's sentinel posts to St. Paul's inaugural services in 1822, join us in honoring two centuries of steadfast worship.

- **Comfort & Community:** Seating and generous shade provided under the summer canopy—come as you are and stay cool.
- **All Are Welcome:** Whether you're a lifelong Episcopalian or simply seeking a peaceful moment amid the Festival's lively folk music, draw near to the ancient prayers and the timeless promise of God's presence.

Bring a friend, and bring your heart ready to praise. Let the voice of the past guide our worship as we gather on the lawn of St. Paul's—where history and hope meet in morning light.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 112 N. Water St. Kittanning, PA 16201  
 Questions? Call (724) 543-5402 or visit [saintpaulskittanning.com](http://saintpaulskittanning.com)



## Calvary's Annual Used Book Sale

Attention all book lovers! Find your next great read - and more - at [Calvary Church's](#) annual Used Book Sale. The big event kicks off with a Preview Party (admission \$10) from 5-7 p.m., Friday, August 8, and continues daily from **10 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday, August 9 through Sunday, August 17** in Calvary's Parish Hall, 315 Shady Ave, Pittsburgh 15206.



One of the region's largest and longest-running used book sales, Calvary's sale features thousands of books ranging from beach reads to Bible studies. Categories include history, travel, children's, popular and literary fiction, politics, religion, spirituality, LGBTQ, cooking, gardening, Pittsburgh/regional interest and more.

The Used Book Sale is now accepting donations. Your great reads go to a great cause. All proceeds benefit the Calvary Bookstore's mission of promoting literacy. Since the sale's inception in 2006, more than \$60,000 has been donated to local educational and literacy organizations.

Donations of books, CDs, DVDs, video/audio tapes and vinyl records can be brought to Calvary during normal business hours. (Please no encyclopedias, magazines or textbooks.) To ensure someone will be available to accept your donation, contact Parish Administrator Kim Pieratt at [kpieratt@calvaryppgh.org](mailto:kpieratt@calvaryppgh.org). We will be glad to arrange for help transporting heavy items. Thank you for supporting the Used Book Sale and its mission!



## Pancake Breakfast, Bake Sale, and Flea Market in Homestead



**Saturday, August 2, 2025, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

**[St. Matthew's Episcopal Church](#)**

**336 East 10th Avenue, Homestead, PA 15120**

Pancake Breakfast is pay as you can  
Buy a table to sell your own items \$25.00  
Questions? Email [jan\\_kusserow@yahoo.com](mailto:jan_kusserow@yahoo.com)



# JUSTICE & FREEDOM: GOD'S STORY IN PITTSBURGH

An Interfaith Series on Scripture, Society & Hope

Hosted by Rabbi Daniel Fellman at Temple Sinai  
and the Rev. Canon Natalie Hall at Church of the Redeemer

2025 Summer sessions held at Church of the Redeemer  
(5700 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15217) with more information  
for fall sessions forthcoming.

First Wednesday of Each Month from June 4, 2025  
through April 15, 2026 • 7:00-8:30 PM

Each session includes large group study, small group conversation,  
and a special presentation by Pittsburgh leaders  
pursuing justice and freedom for our community.

## Optional May 2026 Trip:

Participants will have the opportunity to visit  
Legacy Freedom sites in the U.S. South, The  
group trip is an optional part of the study series.



Scan the QR code  
for more details  
and to register:

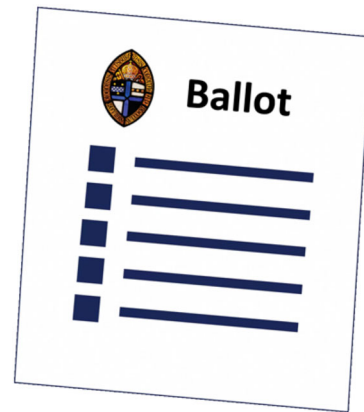
[Click here to sign up](#)

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4CAEAE2FA3FAC52-56936917-justice>



## Nominations Open for Diocesan Governing Bodies and Committees

The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh is now welcoming nominations of clergy and lay persons for election to membership on various governing bodies and committees of the Diocese. The Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for elections to be held at the Diocesan Convention on November 15, 2025. This year's convention will be held at Trinity Cathedral, Downtown.



This year we will be electing:

- One lay person to the Board of Trustees
- One lay person to the Growth Fund
- One clergy and one layperson to:
  - the Standing Committee
  - the Cathedral Chapter
  - the Committee on Constitution and Canons
- One lay person to the Disciplinary Board
- One person (clergy or lay) to the Commission on Ministry
- Four clergy and four lay deputies and four clergy and four lay alternates as Deputies to General Convention held in Phoenix, AZ, in 2027

For more information on the work of the Boards and Committees, please [click here](#).

Multiple candidates for open positions are accepted and encouraged. All positions carry a term of three years (ending in 2028) except for the Standing Committee which has a four-year term (ending in 2029).

Nomination forms have been mailed to all parishes in the Diocese and are [available here](#).



## Fall 2025 Offerings from the Stevenson School for Ministry

### Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Confessing Church

Mondays  
August 25 – December 15  
7:00 - 8:00pm Eastern

Dr. Joshua Davis



## An Introduction to Political Theology

Thursdays  
August 28 – October 16th  
5:30–6:30 pm EST

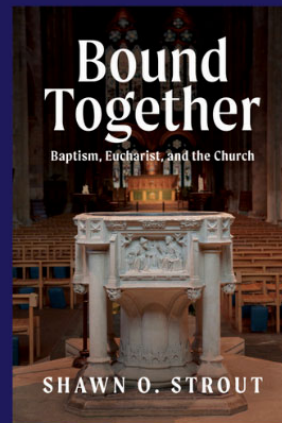
The Rev. Joseph Pagano



## Bound Together: Baptism, Eucharist, and the Church

An SSFM Continuing Education Opportunity

Mondays 7–8pm Eastern  
September 8 – October 6



[Complete course details and registration is available here.](#)

## Diocesan Office Summer Hours

Bishop Ketlen has given the office staff permission to work from home until 2 p.m. on Fridays between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

The staff will be maintaining their normal work hours from Monday to Thursday.

Email and voicemail will be monitored and responded to as needed on Fridays.

**The office will be closed on Friday, July 4, in observation of Independence Day.**



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## Around the Diocese

### Bishop Ketlen's Schedule:

**August 1:** Shepherd Wellness Community, Bloomfield (5 p.m.)

Parish leadership is reminded to complete a form, available in [PDF](#) or [Word](#), 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](mailto:arath@episcopalpgh.org).



## Parting Shots

### St. Brendan's at the Pride Parade

On Sunday, June 1, thirty-nine members of St. Brendan's, Franklin Park, joined thousands of Pittsburghers downtown for a parade celebrating the Pittsburgh Pride Festival, as thousands gathered Downtown.



--Photo courtesy Tom Waseleski

**From the Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle:  
"Rabbi Daniel Fellman, Rev. Canon Natalie Hall,  
create new interfaith study group"**



It was a family trip to Florida that first moved Rabbi Daniel Fellman of Temple Sinai to organize a program focused on social justice.

“In Montgomery, we stopped in at the Equal Justice Initiative, and I was so moved by it, so blown away by it, that I thought to myself, ‘I’ve got to do something.’”

The desire to “do something” led to a partnership with Church of the Redeemer’s the Rev. Canon Natalie Hall and the creation of the interfaith study group “Justice and Freedom: God’s Story in Pittsburgh.”

[Read the story here.](#)

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**From the Indiana Gazette:  
"Geiger gives last sermon before his retirement from Christ Church"**



"The Rev. William L. "Bill" Geiger has completed more than a quarter-century as rector of downtown Indiana's Christ Episcopal Church last week, preaching for a final time in that role at an Ascension Thursday service. Or, as he stressed in a Facebook post, it was not his last sermon ever, "just (the) last before retirement."

[Read the rest of the story here.](#)



## Parting Quote

"Our obligation as Church is to constantly share with others what we learn of God in Christ. This is it. This is our mission."

--The Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, Dean and President of Virginia Theological Seminary

The Gospel is political. But it is political in a particular way. Jesus announced a reign that had no military, maintained unclear borders, called for mercy and compassion as fundamental ways of living, and turned conventional values upside down.

Following the lead of VTS graduate Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde, "Have Mercy" is a series of essays from the faculty of Virginia Theological Seminary and The General Theological Seminary that explore the power of the Gospel for this political moment. These essays aim to be a resource to Christian leaders and the faith communities they serve.

The essays can be found here: <https://vts.edu/have-mercy-initiative/>



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