



From Darkness to Light: An Advent Procession of Lessons & Carols

By Kevin Jones, Director of Music

On the Second Sunday of Advent, December 8, at 5 p.m., St. Paul's and the wider community will celebrate the beginning of Advent with an Advent Procession of Lessons and Carols. In this service, we begin in the Nave with the lights dimmed.



During the prelude music, played by the St. Paul's Ringers at 4:45 p.m., we prepare our hearts and minds for that which is to come—the birth of the Savior and the ultimate salvation of humanity. We call it a procession insofar as the liturgy begins in the Narthex of the church, and a procession proceeds from that point after we hear the ancient Advent Prose, "I look from afar." The movement in the Nave signifies the progressive movement, week by week, of the coming of Christ.

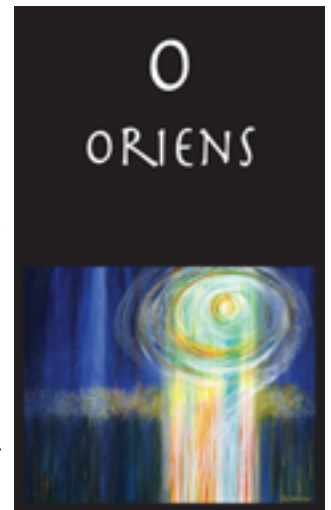


This year, we are adding the singing of the Great "O" Antiphons, seven prayers which urge God with eager longing to "come and save the human race, which you have made." These are prayers of hope and expectation, of trust in God's promises and of longing for the day when all will be made new in Christ.

The service falls into a rhythm shaped by the singing of each antiphon, during which a banner with colorful artwork by artist Robyn Sand Anderson is processed from Narthex to Sanctuary and displayed on the Altar. Each section of the liturgy contains the antiphon, a reading, a musical response or reflection, and a closing prayer.

The service culminates in the singing of the great Advent hymn, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," which is the text of each of the O Antiphons.

We look forward to beginning the new church year together through this service of Lessons and Carols.



A St. Paul's Chorister Christmas | Saturday, December 21, 5:30 p.m.

Join us for beloved Christmas anthems, carols, readings, and poetry as we celebrate the joy of Christmas (just a few days early) with the St. Paul's Ringers, St. Catherine, St. Cecilia & St. David, and Youth Choirs of St. Paul's.

This one-hour concert will be followed by a parish-wide potluck dinner in Tucker Hall. If your last name begins A-M, please bring a side dish or salad to share; N-Z, please bring a dessert. Main course and beverages will be provided. Dishes may be dropped off prior to the concert start.



Music & Art

The Nicholson B. White Gallery Winter Show & Opening Reception

Friday, Dec. 6, 5 – 7 p.m.

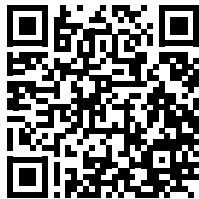


The N.B. White Gallery committee announces its winter show is on display until February 23. The gallery will feature works by Jules Briggs, J.W. Cooper, Mike Nathal, and DeAnne Smith.

The opening reception will be Friday, December 6, from 5 to

7 p.m. Join us to welcome the artists and mingle with parishioners and guests. Refreshments will be served, so come and enjoy.

Learn about the history of the N.B. White Gallery: stpauls-church.org/blog/nb-white-gallery-update



custom, St. Paul's will use blue for our liturgical color this Advent. You'll notice the color in paraments (liturgical hangings such as altar cloths and vestments) as well as the candles in the Advent wreath.



You will also notice the color rose used on the Third Sunday of Advent. (We will light the rose candle on that Sunday, as well.) In both penitential seasons (Advent and Lent), the Church celebrates a shift in liturgical mood at the midway point of each of the two seasons—a Sunday where joy is the focus instead of penance. As a marker of this shift, the liturgical color changes to rose for the day.

Because this color is only used two Sundays out of the whole year, most parishes do not own rose paraments. However, thanks to a generous donor at St. Paul's, we now own a set of rose paraments and will use them on the Third Sunday of Advent and the Fourth Sunday in Lent. The new paraments will be blessed during the 9 a.m. service on the Second Sunday of Advent.



Worship

Joyful New Vestments

By Rev. Gabriel Lawrence

Have you ever looked at an Advent wreath and wondered why three candles are purple (or blue) and one is rose? These colors are not just of arbitrary ecclesiastical creation, but rather, they are chosen specifically as the liturgical colors of the season. The Church has on its calendar two penitential seasons of preparation for its two major feasts: Advent prepares for Christmas, and Lent prepares for Easter. Thus, the color purple for the penitential seasons.

In modern times, some parishes have resurrected a tradition of using blue for Advent. This custom can especially be traced to Pre-Reformation England. In addition to drawing from historical precedent, the color is also used as the color of Mary the God-bearer, who becomes the focus in the latter part of the season. Following in this

Special Services

Longest Night Service

Wednesday, Dec. 18, 6 p.m.

As the longest night of the year approaches, we remember those confronting sadness and grief or who feel disconnected from the joyful spirit of the holidays.

All are welcome to a “Blue Christmas” service with music and candle lighting, when we’ll lay our burdens before God, pray for healing for ourselves and those we love, and hear the hopeful message of the light that shines in the darkness.



Worship

Christmas Eve | Tuesday, Dec. 24

Holy Eucharist will be celebrated at all Christmas Eve services except 9 p.m. Christmas Lessons & Carols

Family Service | 1:30 p.m.



Tucker Hall will be filled with joy at this Christmas Eve service geared toward families with young children. With the participation of the children gathered, we re-enact the Christmas story!

Pageant Service | 4 p.m.



A festive service centered on the annual Christmas Pageant offered by children and youth, complete with a procession of barn animals straight from the nativity scene into the Nave.

Christmas Lessons and Carols | 9 p.m.



This traditional service of seven lessons and carols is led by readers representing various parish ministries, the Senior Choir, and congregational carols. This is a service full of the joy and wonder of Christmas.

Festival Holy Eucharist | 10:30 p.m.



Celebrate the birth of the Christchild in the stillness of the night at this service. The Senior Choir will lead glorious music and the service will end by candlelight.

Christmas Day Eucharist

Wednesday, Dec. 25, 10 a.m.

This combined service on the first day of Christmas will include the reading of the Prologue of John and Christmas carols.

First Sunday after Christmas

Sunday, Dec. 29, 10 a.m.

This combined service on the fifth day of Christmas will include Christmas lessons and carols.

Epiphany Service

Monday, Jan. 6, 6 p.m.

We'll mark the arrival of the magi with the ancient Epiphany custom of the "chalking of the doors" and a service of the Holy Eucharist, followed by a dessert reception featuring King's Cake and toasting with champagne and sparkling grape juice. "Chalking the doors" is a ritual to ask God's blessing on our homes and lives. We'll send everyone home with chalk and special prayers to observe this custom in their own homes.



Feast of the Baptism of our Lord

Sunday, Jan. 12

The next baptisms will be Sunday, January 12, on the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. This feast day celebrates the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. If you are interested in being baptized or having your child baptized, email Rev. Gabriel Lawrence: glawrence@stpauls-church.org



Outreach

Loaves and Fishes Sock Drive

until Monday, Dec. 9

Spread the warmth of Christmas this year! St. Paul's will collect 200 pairs of **new, cotton or wool** socks for residents of the Men's Shelter. These will make a big difference to folks who spend a lot of time outside in cold weather. Please bring donations to the bins in the narthex, foyer, or in front of the office by Monday, December 9 Thank you!



For more information, contact Adam Blackman: blackman@clevelandinternationalfund.com

Loaves and Fishes Christmas Dinner

Wednesday, Dec. 11, 5 - 7 p.m.

Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries Men's Shelter, 2100 Lakeside Ave., Cleveland

The Loaves and Fishes ministry will serve its annual, festive Christmas dinner at the LMM Men's Shelter. Like last year's dinner, when 220 holiday dinners were served, this promises to be a joyous occasion with traditional Christmas festivities. You can help by making a casserole, baking sweet treats, or coming by the dinner to socialize or help serve the meal.



For more information, contact Adam Blackman: blackman@clevelandinternationalfund.com

Advent Outreach Giving

Sundays, Dec. 1, 8, and 15, Foyer

Voting for our annual Advent Outreach Giving will be the first three Sundays of Advent. Here's how it works: the Outreach Committee has identified three local organizations in line with our mission to youth, hunger, and the health of our community. All three organizations will receive money this season, thanks to the parish's generosity (via Outreach discretionary funds).

FIRST, learn more about the organizations:



The Centers: This organization serves throughout Northeast Ohio. St. Paul's funds will be given to their Integrated Health and Wellness Center, which treats **everyone, always**, offering everything from physical check-ups to mental health counseling and psychiatry services. Learn more at TheCentersOhio.org



Lake Erie Ink: This organization provides a writing space for youth, founded with a simple yet powerful mission to provide a creative environment where young people can express themselves through writing. The mission was inspired by the belief that everyone has a story to tell, and every story deserves to be heard. Learn more at LakeErieInk.org



Food Strong: This organization's mission is to cultivate food justice in Northeast Ohio and beyond by building enduring local food systems from the ground up. Their programs include youth education, urban revitalization, and community engagement. Learn more at FoodStrong.org

Then, cast your vote for the organization of your choice during the first three Sundays in Advent. The highest vote-getter will receive \$3,000. The second highest, \$2,000. The third-highest, \$1,000. There are no losers! With your help, St. Paul's will donate a total of \$6,000 to these local missions.

Formation

Advent Forums

By Rev. Patricia Rose

St. Paul's has resources to do a tremendous amount of good in this world! Not just material resources but faithful people, passion, love, gifts, and the grace and light of Christ in our midst. What a sacred blessing to have such an opportunity!

God is offering us the chance to do the work of Divine Love in this anxious world where so many are hurting, and so much is at stake. The question is: *How? How might we most impactfully and faithfully use what we have to respond to the needs in our world?*

This is what everyone is invited to reflect on at three Sunday forums in Advent. Where might God be leading us at this pivotal moment? We have been praying each Sunday for God's wisdom to lead us. This process of discernment is not a spectator sport though. It is a full engagement. It involves actively listening, holding our thoughts and preferences lightly to create space to notice God's movements in our midst. Everyone is heartily invited. Every voice and heart is needed. We will have presentations and discussions in service to being attentive to God's call for St. Paul's.

I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go?" Then said I, "Here am I; send me." *Isaiah 6:8*

In these Forums, we will hear about many aspects of St. Paul's Outreach and let it inform our hearts, our longing, our collective capacity of discerning.

We not only wish to be bearers of Christ's birth into the world, but we have been fashioned by God to do so, and asked by Christ to do so. We have been told it is the way to all we most need and want, and our hearts already know this.

Hark, a joyful birth is coming!

Outreach in the Resource-Size Church

Sunday, Dec. 1, 10:10 a.m.

"Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?"
"We will, with God's help."

All Christians are called to love and serve Christ in meeting the needs of others.

In the Baptismal Covenant, we promise to do this as individuals. As members of the Body of Christ, we promise to do it together as church. In this session we will explore the particular challenges of being effective ministers of this baptismal promise as a "resource-size" church.

Presenter: Bishop Jeffrey Lee



Faith in Action

Sunday, Dec. 8, 10:10 a.m.

As we reflect on the ways we love and serve Christ through St. Paul's Outreach ministries, an important component is the dedicated work of the St. Paul's Outreach Committee. This committee will offer a snapshot of their work overseeing the funds for ongoing ministries and responding to various requests for support.

Presenter: St. Paul's Outreach Committee.



We Will with God's Help

Sunday, Dec. 15, 10:10 a.m.

Last February, a team was formed with a question: "How might we most faithfully, effectively, impactfully use the significant funds allocated to Outreach through the Capital Campaign?" The team set about its work through deeply reflective, intentional prayer and what became an increasingly expanding study of Outreach at St. Paul's, and around us in other churches and community organizations. There's much to share, and we invite everyone to engage in this discernment. **Presenter: St. Paul's Outreach Visioning Team.**

Children & Youth

Full Cast Christmas Pageant Rehearsal

Monday, Dec. 23, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
(Pageant performance during the 4 p.m. Christmas Eve Service)



Join in the miracle of Christmas and help tell the story of how it all happened! Children ages four and up are invited to be an angel, shepherd, or sheep in St. Paul's Christmas Pageant. To be ready, *all pageant participants* should attend the full cast rehearsal on

December 23. **Parents of a child under eight must stay to supervise their children during the rehearsal.**

Email Susan Armstrong with any questions about the pageant: sarmstrong@stpauls-church.org

Auditions for the CAST Musical

Saturday, Jan. 11, 12 - 2 p.m.
Show Dates: Feb. 28, March 1 & 2

The CAST musical is coming around soon! Kids in third grade and up are invited to audition. We will announce our show soon. Email Lauren Dockery with questions about auditions: ldockery@stpauls-church.org

Eliza Backus Guild Greens Workshop

Thursday, Dec. 5, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m., Dining Room



Make a holiday centerpiece, boxwood tree, or an evergreen swag for your door; everyone goes home with a unique and beautiful decoration for their home! The workshop is open to all, including children. A light supper will be provided.

The cost is **\$35 for one arrangement** and **\$65 for two**. If you prefer to make your creation at home, you can preorder a **to-go bag of greens and trimmings for \$30**. One dollar from each arrangement will go to St. Luke's Episcopal Church for outerwear for children in need.

Registration available online: TinyUrl.com/greens-wksp



Scan to register

Contact Sally Bosley with questions: 216-832-1817

SAGES Update

SAGES, St. Paul's group for older adults, will not host an event this month, but we are excited for intergenerational fellowship at All Things Advent and the Eliza Backus Guild Greens Workshop!

Chili Cook-Off

Friday, Jan. 24, 6:30 - 9 p.m., Tucker Hall

Save the date for the fourth annual St. Paul's Chili Cook-Off! If you have a favorite chili recipe, enjoy chili, or just like warm fellowship on a cold winter night, we hope you will join us for an evening of good food, fun people, and friendly competition. Prizes will be awarded!

Registration is free for chili chefs and \$25 for all others. The chefs will supply the chili and the Parish Fellowship Committee will provide appetizers, cornbread, salad, desserts, and beverages (beer, wine, and non-alcoholic options). Chef sign ups and RSVP information to come.



Fellowship

All Things Advent

Sunday, Dec. 1, 5 - 7:30 p.m., Tucker Hall

Kick off the Advent season with warmth, fellowship, and fun for the whole family at All Things Advent! Come for part or all of the evening and enjoy a soup supper and fellowship along with wreath making, waiting bulbs, and other festive crafts. We suggest a donation of \$5 per person.



Parish Updates

Men's Council Greens Sale

until Wednesday, Dec. 11



The Men's Council annual Greens and Poinsettia Sale is underway! Available for purchase are poinsettias, wreaths, bows, centerpieces, roping, and swags. All proceeds support the Journey Center for Safety and Healing.

Order your items in person after services, through the Men's Council website, or by calling (216) 435-9219.



Order online

In-person order deadline:

Sunday, Dec. 8.

Online order deadline:

Wednesday, Dec. 11.

Pick-up: Sundays through Dec. 15

Order online:

TinyUrl.com/stp-greens

Stewardship Updates

Thank you to the many parishioners who have submitted their pledge to the 2025 Annual Fund, which will support all aspects of church life and ministry during the coming year. As of November 26, we have received 197 pledges totaling \$973,700. This brings us to 75% of our dollar goal and 59% of our total household participation goal. That's a great start but we still have work to do!



If you have not yet returned your 2025 Annual Fund pledge, please do so soon! You can pledge online or by submitting the pledge form you received in the mail. There are extra pledge forms in the pews and information racks around the church. Thank you!

Pledge online: stpauls-church.org/2025pledge

Tower Christmas Wreaths

We are very sorry to announce that our beloved tower wreaths will not be raised this Christmas season. They have been a long tradition at St. Paul's, and parishioners and neighbors alike have looked forward to their appearance each December. Unfortunately, T-Mobile, which rents space in the tower for their antennae, needed to move the antennae to a lower window.

Despite months of design and installation discussions, when the antennae were in place, our Men's Council team of wreath-raising engineers determined that there was no way to safely secure the wreaths and ensure no damage to the T-Mobile equipment or the church building.

The Men's Council is already hard at work identifying options for the 2025 Christmas season. They are committed to finding alternative locations for the wreaths or other ways of lighting the tower to celebrate Christmas. They promise that they are not giving up!



The Annual Meeting

Sunday, Jan. 26, 11:15 a.m., following a combined service at 10 a.m.

Let's gather to reflect on 2024 and look ahead to the new year. We'll hear reports from the Senior Warden and Treasurer, view the 2025 budget, give thanks to outgoing Vestry members, and elect new members. The Rector Search Committee will present a status report, including a summary of Holy Conversations, the parish survey, and their progress on the Parish Profile. As a valuable part of the St. Paul's community, we hope you will attend!

A November to Remember!

