

(Please silence all cell-phones & digital devices until after the Service! Thank you.)

PRELUDE – Savior of the Nations, Come (BWV 659)

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

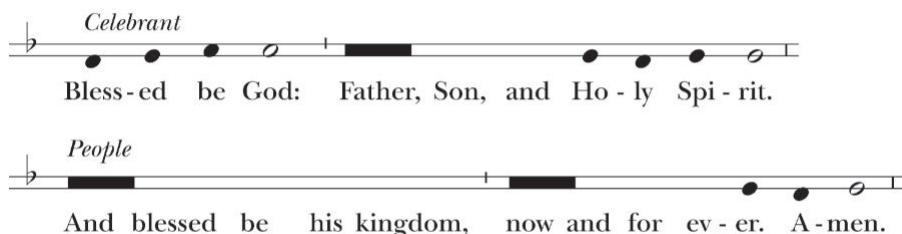
THE ENTRANCE RITE

PROCESSIONAL HYMN – #72 “Hark! the glad sound! the Savior comes”

Richmond

THE OPENING ACCLAMATION

S76



Celebrant

Bless-ed be God: Father, Son, and Ho-ly Spi-rit.

People

And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ev-er. A-men.

THE COLLECT FOR PURITY

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

TRISAGION

Mass for St. Paul's - William Bradley Roberts (1947)

Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

The Celebrant says to the people

The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE WORD OF GOD

THE FIRST READING

Isaiah 35:1-10

Reader A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Reader The Word of the Lord
People **Thanks be to God**

PSALM 146:4-9 – *Read at 8AM; chanted by the choir at 10:15*

Plainsong

- 4 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! *
 whose hope is in the Lord their God;
- 5 **Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; ***
 who keeps his promise for ever;
- 6 Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, *
 and food to those who hunger.
- 7 **The Lord sets the prisoners free;**
 the Lord opens the eyes of the blind; *
 the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
- 8 The Lord loves the righteous;
 the Lord cares for the stranger; *
 he sustains the orphan and widow,
 but frustrates the way of the wicked.
- 9 **The Lord shall reign for ever, ***
 your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.
 Hallelujah!

THE EPISTLE

James 5:7-10

Reader A reading from the Letter of James.

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the

Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Reader The Word of the Lord
People **Thanks be to God**

THE SEQUENCE HYMN – #76 “On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry”

Winchester New

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 11:2-11

Then, all standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads the Gospel, first saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

“Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

Reader The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ**

THE SERMON

The Very Reverend Rebecca A. Barnes

THE NICENE CREED – Spoken; All Stand, as able

BCP page 358

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Intercessor: As we wait with joy for the glory of the Lord, let us offer prayers to God who opens the eyes of the blind and preaches good news to the poor, saying: **Come, O Holy One, and save us.**

For the Church: especially Sarah, Archbishop of Canterbury, Designate, Sean our Presiding Bishop, Stephen, our Provisional Bishop, and our Diocese as we move forward in our search for a new Bishop Diocesan, that we may always proclaim to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, and do not fear!" **Come, O Holy One, and save us.**

For this Cathedral community, that we may wait patiently for the fulfillment of God's promise to us and rely on God's love in all things. **Come, O Holy One, and save us.**

For an end to war and healing for the nations, that violence and bloodshed may cease, the innocent may be sheltered, terrorism ended, and peace be established in the hearts of all. **Come, O Holy One, and save us.**

For government officials and leaders, that God's Spirit will guide their work, help them to recognize and speak the truth, and open them to new ways of addressing the issues of immigration, poverty, and violence. **Come, O Hold one, and save us.**

For openness of heart, that we may recognize God in the prophets, experiences, and unexpected events of our lives. **Come, O Holy One, and save us.**

For those everywhere who suffer from the power of nature, those whose lives are impacted by senseless violence, and for the sick and the suffering, remembering especially, Lex, Sally, Brandy, Judy, Miles, Clark, Geri, Dominic, Steve & Tracy, Lisa and family, Andrea, Larry and Diane, Byron, Chris, Joe, Carl, Lori, Larry, Carol, Renee, Sharon, Elaine, Anne, Jim, Judy, and Shirley, that they may know the comforting and healing presence of God. **Come, O Holy One, and save us.**

For all those who have died, remembering especially Juanita, Barbara, George, Don, Robert, and those whose anniversaries of death we mark this week, that they may come to Zion singing for joy and gladness. **Come, O Holy One, and save us.**

In the communion of Blessed Mary, the God-bearer, Blessed Paul, and all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, to Christ our God. **To you, O Lord our God.**

Celebrant: O come, Son of David, hear our prayers this day, open our eyes to your presence and awaken our hearts to sing your praise, that we may announce in word and deed the good news of your reign. Glory to you for ever and ever. Amen.

CONFSSION OF SIN

The Deacon or Celebrant says

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The Bishop, when present, or the Priest, stands and says

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.
Amen.

THE PEACE - All stand.

BCP page 360

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

Then the Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of Jesus Christ.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

BCP page 358

Walk in Love, as Christ loved us and give himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

Representatives of the congregation bring the people's offerings of bread and wine, and money or other gifts, to the deacon or celebrant. The people stand while the offerings are presented and placed on the Altar.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM – This is the Record of John

Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

This is the record of John
When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him
Who art thou?
And he confessed and denied not, and said plainly
I am not the Christ

And they asked him, What art thou then? Art thou Elias?
And he said, I am not
Art thou the prophet?
And he answered, No

Then said they unto him
What art thou? that we may give an answer unto them that sent us
What sayest thou of thyself?
And he said, I am the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness
Make straight the way of the Lord

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

EUCARISTIC PRAYER B – BCP page 367

The Celebrant, whether bishop or priest, faces them and sings or says

The image shows musical notation for the Sanctus. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff has 'Celebrant' and 'People' parts. The second staff has 'Celebrant' and 'People' parts. The third staff has 'Celebrant' and 'People' parts. The fourth staff has 'People' parts. The lyrics are: 'The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give him thanks and praise.'

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name::

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY LORD

Roberts

The people stand or kneel.

Then the Celebrant continues

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or to lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

THE MEMORIAL ACCLIMATION

S136

Celebrant

There - fore, ac - cord - ing to his com - mand, O Fa - ther,

Celebrant and People

We re - mem - ber his death, We pro - claim his re - sur -

rec - tion, We a - wait his com - ing in glo - ry.

The Celebrant continues

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with [_____ and] all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.

THE GREAT AMEN

S147

A - men. A - men. A - men.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

THE LORD'S PRAYER

S119

Our Fa - ther, who art in hea - ven, hal - low - ed
be thy Name, thy king - dom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in hea - ven. Give us this day our
dai - ly bread. And for - give us our tres - pas - ses,
as we for - give those who tres - pass a - gainst us. And lead
us not in - to temp - ta - tion, but de - liv - er us
from e - vil. For thine is the king - dom, and the power,
and the glo - ry, for ev - er and ev - er. A - men.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

BCP page 364

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us,
People **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

THE FRACTION ANTHEM

Roberts

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

BCP page 364

The Celebrant says

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

We welcome all baptized persons, regardless of age or denomination, to receive communion here at Saint Paul's. If you do not wish to receive communion, we invite you to come forward to a blessing. To show that you wish to receive a blessing, please cross your arms across your chest.

COMMUNION ANTHEM – E'en so Lord Jesus Quickly Come

Paul Manz (1919-2009)

Peace be to you and grace from him
Who freed us from our sins,
Who loved us all and shed his blood
That we might saved be.

Sing holy, holy to our Lord,
The Lord, Almighty God,
Who was and is and is to come;
Sing holy, holy, Lord!

Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein,
Rejoice on earth, ye saints below,
For Christ is coming, is coming soon,
For Christ is coming soon!

E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come,
And night shall be no more;
They need no light nor lamp nor sun,
For Christ will be their All!

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

BCP page 365

Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

Eternal God, heavenly Father, ***you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.***

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

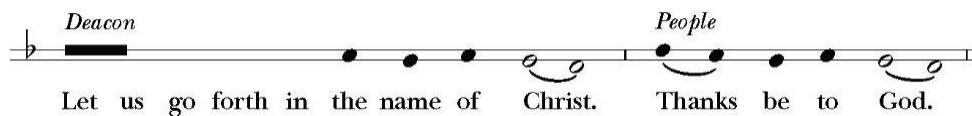
THE BLESSING

May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

HYMN AT THE RETIRING PROCESSION – #59 “Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding” Merton

DISMISSAL

S 174



POSTLUDE – Savior of the Nations, Come (BWV 660b)

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

*The flowers at the altar are given to the Glory of God in memory of Ruth Missel
by Judy Kelly and Family.*

CATHEDRAL LIFE | DECEMBER 14TH
ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL – SPCBUFFALO.ORG

TODAY

- Bible Study – 9 a.m. lower level/Walker – coffee and discussion of scripture lessons for the week
- Coffee/Refreshments – after the 10:15 service, lower level/Walker

Funeral Service for Donald Simet

Your prayers are requested for the repose of the soul of Donald Simet. Funeral services will be held at St. Paul's Cathedral on Saturday, December 20 at 11AM. Final entombment will be at Sts. Peter & Paul Cemetery, Hamburg, NY.

Advent and Christmas at St. Paul's Cathedral

ADVENT:

Advent Study – A Child is Born: A Beginner's Guide to Nativity Stories by Amy-Jill Levine

In preparation for the celebration of the coming of the Christ child, this Advent, we will explore the fascinating connections between ancient birth stories and the Nativity of Jesus in this captivating four-week Advent study. This most recent book by renowned Biblical scholar, Amy-Jill Levine journeys through the births of Isaac and Ishmael, Samson, and Samuel revealing how they foreshadow and enrich the timeless Christmas story in the final chapter. Dr. Levine brings her expert knowledge of Scripture and careful consideration of the Christian story to show readers how Scripture's earlier birth stories anticipate the story of Jesus's birth and how the birth resonates and gives new meaning to those earlier stories. Transform your Advent season with fresh insights and inspiration from *A Child is Born*. Book is available on Kindle or in paperback from your favorite bookseller. Sessions will be held on Zoom on Mondays Dec. 1, 15, 22 and Tuesday, Dec. 9. at 7pm. Please use the following link:

<https://tinyurl.com/3jetzz8k> – Meeting ID: 716 855 0900 Password: 4cathedral

2025 CHRISTMAS SERVICES:

Longest Night/Blue Christmas, December 21 – 5pm

On the longest night of the year, we celebrate a service designed especially for those who have experienced loss, are going through a challenging time, or find the holidays difficult.

Christmas Eve, December 24

4:00pm - Lessons and Carols

At 4PM on Christmas Eve, December 24th, the cathedral choir will proclaim the birth of our Savior through word and song. This festive, family-friendly, hour-long service with roots at Truro Cathedral, and widely popularized by King's College, Cambridge, this annual service is much-loved throughout the world.

11:00pm - The Nativity of Our Lord - The “Christ-Mass”

The ChristMass: At 11pm on Christmas Eve, December 24th, the community is invited to gather for the ChristMass. This solemn, joy-filled, and candlelit Eucharist will include music by the cathedral choir and organ. During the Mass, the congregation will sing the beloved carol “Silent Night” by candlelight.

Christmas Day, December 25

10:15am – Christmas Day: The Nativity of Our Lord

On Christmas Day, December 25th, all are welcome to attend Christmas Mass at 10:15am. This Eucharist will include congregational singing of Christmas carols with organ accompaniment.

New Year's Day, January 1, 2026 - The Feast of the Holy Name

On New Year's Day, we will step into the New Year with the celebration of Holy Eucharist at 10:15am. This day we recall the naming of Jesus eight days after his birth and that God highly exalted Jesus "and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth."

January 6 - Feast of the Epiphany, 6pm

Join us as we celebrate the arrival of the Magi and the manifestation of Christ to the peoples of the earth.

Christian Education and Formation at St. Paul's

Children's Christian Education: “Godly Play”

St. Paul's offers “Godly Play: is a Montessori-based program on Sundays at 10am in the Bishop Scaife Room on the lower level of the Cathedral. Making meaning through story, wonder, and play, the program nurtures spiritual lives by honoring the centrality, competency, and capacity of children.

Looking ahead...

Epiphany Centering Prayer Introductory Workshop

Centering Prayer is a receptive method of Christian silent prayer which deepens our relationship with God, the Indwelling Presence ... a prayer in which we can experience God's presence within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than consciousness itself. This method of prayer is both a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. A Centering Prayer Introductory workshop will be offered throughout the season of Epiphany beginning with a workshop on Saturday, January 10, 2026 from 10am - 3pm. Follow-up sessions designed for ongoing learning and group spiritual support will be held on January 17, 24, 31, February 7, and 14. The workshop will be by The Very Rev'd Rebecca Barnes, Dean, who is a commissioned presenter and facilitator trainer with Contemplative Outreach, Ltd.

Lent 2026 – Bible Study on the Gospel of John

More details will be available soon.

SAVE THE DATE: The Psychology of Christian Nationalism with The Rev. Dr. Pamela Cooper-White, Saturday, April 18, 2026

How do we overcome polarization in American society? How do we advocate for justice when one side won't listen to the other and cycles of outrage escalate? How do we talk with each other when people of different perspectives are seen as evil, immoral, or anti-American? Dr. Pamela Cooper-White has written a book entitled "The Psychology of Christian Nationalism: Why People Are Drawn In and How to Talk Across the Divide". To read more about her, see her bio here www.linkedin.com/in/pamelacooperwhite

Dr. Cooper-White will address this topic at Holy Trinity on Saturday, April 18, 2026. She will also preach at St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral on Sunday, April 19, 2026. Save these dates. More details will be available soon.

This event is sponsored by: Episcopal Diocese of WNY; Upstate NY Synod of the Lutheran Church in America; St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, Buffalo; Holy Trinity Lutheran Church - Buffalo, NY.

An SJAT Note for Epiphany gifts to Garden of Love patrons

From Kim Goodman and Bob Ludwig for the Social Justice Action Team

Epiphany Gifts to Our Garden of Love Patrons – For the four Sundays starting today (14 December, and concluding on January 4, 2026), the Social Justice Action Team will support a congregation-wide project of gifts to everyone who receives Garden of Love food on Monday January 5th thru Friday the 9th , which in the course of the week is about fifty different individuals. There will be a display in the back of the church and narthex to show what we would like you to give and a member of SJAT to talk with you. The gifts proposed are:

(clothing) neck gaiters [a stretchy cloth cylinder that goes over one's head and pulls down to keep the neck warm in winter], caps, gloves; and

(short-term use) hand and toe warmers, chapsticks, peppermints/throat lozenges, kleenex tissue, hand lotion.

Gifts of checks and cash will enable SJAT to buy in bulk. We expect to create a personal present by wrapping the items given to each one. For those who go to the Thursday Art class, contributions of sketchbooks, drawing pencils, reusable, non-plastic water bottles for use in the Ministry Center would also be welcome.

From the Dean's Desk

On Wednesday, December 10, St. Paul's hosted a press conference at which the findings of the Erie County Clergy Jail Visiting Project were released. It was especially fitting as it was also the 77th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which was put forth by the United Nations in its early days following the Second World War.

The Declaration affirms fundamental human rights, and dignity and worth of the human person, and is pertinent to our gathering today, as it further acclaims in Article 5 that “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The Clergy Jail Visiting Project’s aims are most certainly in line with those of the Declaration whose common standards of achievements for all peoples and all nations recognize the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Our own tradition calls for similar covenantal promises at Baptism, that we will strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.

It was my privilege to welcome members of the press not only as the Dean of this Cathedral – and a house of worship in near proximity to our County Downtown Holding Center, but as a participant in this project. I had the privilege of visiting both the Correctional Facility in Alden and the Downtown Holding. The visits I made and the conversations I had with incarcerated persons are part of the collective findings contained in the report. They also match those of experiences I have had in other regions of the country – need for better food, health services, meaningful activity, religious and spiritual care, and greater awareness and means for dismantling racism and other forms of discrimination. In short, our issues are not necessarily unique to Erie County, but reflect an ongoing need in our nation for penal reform, not only for the sake of those who are incarcerated, but for those who serve in our correctional facilities.

My hopes for this project are that it shed light on areas that need attention, and that we concentrate not on the negative in order to criticize, but look to how we as people of this county, whose prisons are run in our name and with our tax dollars, can better work together for the good of all in our community and the greater WNY region.

View a copy of the report: <https://tinyurl.com/b5cf9u6j>

Save the Date - Christmas Party Invitation

On Saturday December 27th Scott Sciumeca, one of our parishioners, will be hosting an adult Christmas Party at his home. The party will start at 5:00 PM and all members of the congregation and choir are invited, along with a guest if so desired. While there will not be a sit down dinner, there will be plenty of food, beverages, including adult beverages, and desserts for all everyone to enjoy. Guests need not bring anything, except perhaps their best holiday cheer. As we get closer to the date, everyone will be given an opportunity to contact Scott via email to let him know who, and how many, will be coming, for planning purposes.

DIDN'T GET YOUR INVITATION TO THE CHRISTMAS PARTY?

Perhaps you do not have a current email address on file with the Cathedral office. Please contact Teresa at teresa@spcbuffalo.org to update your email address and get your invitation to the Christmas Party.

Prayer and Pastoral Care

We lift up the following in prayer especially Lex, Sally, Brandy, Judy, Miles, Clark, Geri, Dominic, Steve & Tracy, Lisa and family, Andrea, Larry and Diane, Byron, Chris, Joe, Carl, Lori, Larry, Carol, Renee, Sharon, Elaine, Anne, Jim, Judy, and Shirley. We also remember all those who have died, especially Juantia, Barbara, Anthony, Don, Robert, and George, and those whose anniversaries of death we mark this week. We pray for them and their loved ones who remember them.

ACROSS THE DIOCESE AND THE CHURCH

Search Committee Update

The whole team gathered at the Diocesan Center on December 6 from 10am-1pm to continue our work in the search for our next Bishop. In this first stage of the process, we had a really positive response to all of our data gathering opportunities. Lots of good discussions were had at our listening sessions, both in-person throughout the Diocese and on Zoom. Committee members had very meaningful 1:1 discussions with various stakeholders. And extremely valuable data was gained from all the participants in our Holy Cow survey. At our combined meeting, we went through all the data collected and concentrated on what themes we heard. We focused on answering that in three specific areas – Strengths, Struggles and What we Need in a Bishop. From these themes, we have a better understanding of how we need to frame the content written for our Diocesan Profile.

Think of the profile as our “job ad”. What story do we need to tell to attract the right candidate that is passionate and ready to embark on our journey together. There is good pastoral work that needs to be done for all the parishes of our diocese and we talked about how best to present that message. We heard loud and clearly that the people of our region need a bishop who is ready to help us move forward and deploy our strength as a united entity. We also realized how much GREAT WORK is already being done by our individual parishes. We floated (pun intended...) a couple of themes that really seem to speak to who we are: one being how connective water is to our area (abundance/rejuvenation), another being how much emphasis is put on serving our communities (come to our table). From that came the idea of puzzle pieces or a mosaic; how each of us are parts of the whole picture. We are a resilient group who loves the underdog (the BILLS WILL WIN a Superbowl) and cares deeply for our neighbor. We value humor, traditions and learning. It’s exciting to think that our next bishop is out there right now.

The next month is pretty busy for our committee; advent season is upon us, but we are also targeted to have the first draft of our profile done by January 5th. To that end we are pleased to share that we hired Juliana Conidi to be our graphic designer on the profile. Check out her work at www.julianaconidi.com. It is the teams goal to go “public” with the profile in early February and then start receiving candidate interest thereafter.

Lisa Yaggie
Chair, Search Committee

Flu Season Reminder

The flu season is upon us, and where I live in Monroe County, the flu has increased by 200% in just one week. That's probably the result of Thanksgiving travel. As you wrestle with the flu in your communities, I remind you of some of the protocols that we use to keep people safe.

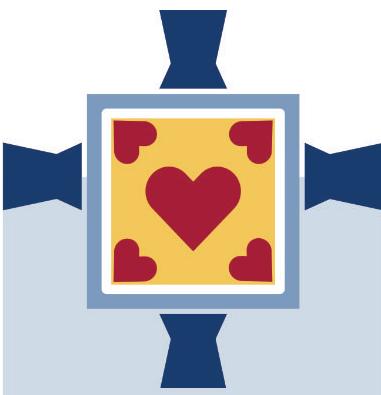
People may wear masks, and you may want to encourage that for folks with special vulnerabilities.

It's also appropriate to take communion in one kind, that is, bread. That's full communion. I do that.

You may also want to encourage folks who aren't feeling well to stay home and to watch your online service.

We've learned a lot since the onslaught of COVID. Let's put our learning to use for the safety of our communities.

Bishop Steve



Questions for Reflection:

How do you recognize Generosity in your life?



J. Davey Gerhard is the Executive Director of TENS and believes in God's all-inclusive invitation to find Love when we are gathered together.

He lives, works, and worships in San Francisco, California.

Plenty Good Room

An Advent Reflection

Advent is the season of holy anticipation. We light candles in the dark, trusting that God's promised light will break into the world. We listen to prophets and angels who remind us that God is preparing a place among us, and that all creation is invited to receive the gift of Emmanuel, God with us.

The spiritual Plenty Good Room proclaims this truth with joy: there is already a place prepared, a seat waiting at the table of God's kingdom. As the chorus sings, "just choose your seat and sit down." Advent's promise is not only that Christ will come again, but that even now, God is making space for each of us in the circle of love.

Too often we believe the lie of scarcity – that there is not enough time, not enough money, not enough hope, not enough room. Advent overturns this fear. Mary sings that the hungry will be filled, that the lowly will be lifted up. John the Baptist cries out that valleys will be raised, mountains made low, rough places smoothed into a highway for our God. Advent tells us that there is always enough room when God is at the center.

To prepare for Christ's coming is to build bigger tables, not higher walls. It is to set one more place, to widen the circle, to remember that generosity is not diminished by sharing; it multiplies. God has already shown us this pattern: creation itself is an act of divine abundance, and our calling is to reflect that generosity in our lives.

This Advent, as we prepare our hearts and our homes for the arrival of Christ, let us also prepare our church for Christ's mission. Every prayer, every gift, every pledge of support becomes part of the banquet God is spreading before us. There is plenty good room – for you, for me, for all God's children

Come, Lord Jesus. Make your home among us, and help us make room for one another.

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you." – Isaiah 60:1 TENS.org

New or visiting today? Everything you need to participate in worship is in this bulletin and the Hymnal in the pew (red or blue). We invite you to join in praying, singing, and responding, as you are comfortable.

Restrooms are located on the lower level. From the elevator, proceed through the double glass doors and look to your right for an accessible restroom. Additional restrooms are on the same level, to the left, near the kitchen.

Children are always welcome in worship and are invited to explore! Greeters can provide activity kits, available in the back of the church. Godly Play is also offered. For details: cathedral@spcbuffalo.org.

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Kathy Reiss; Altar Guild
Frank Smigelsky, Evelyn Smigelsky; Ushers
Estelle Siener; Coffee Hour Host
Kourosh Karami; Livestream Coordinator

Kathy Reiss, Susan Hadden, Roger Woodard; Readers
Kathy Reiss; Intercessor
Charles Casto Jr., Latanya Jacob; Eucharistic Ministers
Tim Socha; Guest Organist

The Very Reverend Rebecca A. Barnes; Celebrant and Preacher

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