

December 2024

THE TORCH

ST. AIDAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, CAMANO ISLAND, WA

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From the Vicar

Advent means coming, arrival, appearance, emergence, birth. This dynamic word is also, of course, the name of the first season of the church year, the four Sundays leading up to Christmas. It's kind of a peculiar season that we in the traditional, liturgical Church continue to observe year after year. It's penitential in nature, but not dour. It invites us to slow down even while the world speeds up. It encourages us to reflect inwardly but also rejoice outwardly with hopeful anticipation. It simply can't be confined to one strict and narrow box. And, frankly, this is what I love about it.

No one is exactly certain when the practice of Advent really began, but most church historians believe it dates back at least to the year 480. At the council of Tours in 567 it was mandated that monks and nuns fast every single day of December until Christmas. The council of Macon in 581 adopted the precedent set by Tours, and Gregory the Great mentions a pre-Christmas four week season (but without a fast) in his Homilies of the late sixth century. But it wasn't until the 8th century that clear references to Advent started showing up in the Church's liturgical manuals, specifically the Gelasian Sacramentary. In the 14th century Pope Urban V ordered abstinence for the papal court in Rome, but there was no mention of fasting, and the length of Advent was five weeks. While at the same time, the Greeks had Advent beginning on November 15 or December 6 and observance was completely optional. The history of Advent is long and rich, but entirely varied and inconsistent! And, again, I absolutely love that.

As we approach Advent we come to it with all kinds of thoughts and feelings. Many come to Advent with long-held family traditions, like setting up the Christmas tree the day after Thanksgiving. Others don't want to see a Christmas light or hear a Christmas carol until December 24th. Still others are somewhere in between, choosing to slow down and focus on the coming of the holy Child of God as they gradually introduce more Christmas decorations the nearer they get to the 25th.

I am hesitant to judge anyone too harshly for how they may approach the joyful season of Christmas. But I am keenly interested in how our hearts and spirits are nurtured (or not) during this beautiful period. Christ coming and dwelling among us is a gift of such unimaginable magnitude. It's worth taking a moment to consider how one should receive that gift afresh once more. For me, so much of it comes down to presence. Being mindful. Being open. Being unrushed. A gift from a loved one is imbued with extra grace when I am present to and mindful of the meaning and intention and sacrifice of the giver. If I'm open to it the gift becomes a bridge to a deeper relationship.

As you come to Advent may you find small ways — whatever they may be! — to nurture your soul, feed your spirit, and center your life on the love of God that came down on Christmas.

Grace and peace to you in this holy season.

Drew+



From the Senior Warden

The Prayer Journal

Years ago, I had an older friend who kept a daily journal. In her writings, she noted the weather, who she spoke with, her thoughts about life, where she shopped and/or where she traveled to that day. The collection of journals was impressive and it took up many shelves, closets and boxes. Her entire life, documented to the detail. I was amazed at the discipline and focus it took to maintain that daily ritual.

For me, journaling was a bit more random and took on the form of prayer requests. When I look at the early dates, the prayer requests began soon after I became a mother — the chaotic time of lost control! I had passed through a moment of young love, recent marriage, novel ideas of the future ahead and an expectation of how perfect everything would become.

Then life happened...

Not to suggest that my early years were difficult — only to say that happenstances, fates and aftermaths occurred. My father and mother-in-law both died within a short time of each other, my young sister-in-law and a college friend were diagnosed with cancer, a personal health issue occurred, a growing business had endless challenges and future uncertainties started creeping into what was once — endless days of blue skies. As a result, I needed a spiritual refuge, support, guidance and encouragement from an ever present and faithful Lord and Savior. That's when I started a prayer journal.

Back in the 1980's, journal entries dealt with the spiritual and physical healing of family and friends. Many of my prayers were for loved ones, navigating new circumstances, new challenges, seeking direction and all looking for peace. My own personal needs and journal entries were many — asking for forgiveness, counsel, strength and hope.

As time passed, my prayer requests were no less sincere or challenging. Cancer, death, lost jobs, lost kids and lost things along the way, seemed to fill the pages. I learned to understand this about life — that in the good times and the bad, hopefully, we keep requesting, reaching out and clinging to a risen Savior who once lived among us and who personally experienced similar struggles.

I don't remember when, but at some point, I must have needed confirmation that God was really listening to me. Was there really power in prayer? Should I persevere? Did I have reason to hope? This must have been a time of questioning because I have noticed that in most of my journals, noted in the side margins and next to different prayer requests were the words — Answered, Still Waiting, A Better Understanding Needed, God is Good.

In God's infinite wisdom and overall understanding, His answers were beautiful, timely and quite remarkable. From the perspective of my far less infinite wisdom and limited understanding, His answers didn't often make any sense. Why did my sister-in-law, my dad and/or my husband have to suffer and die so young? Why the discord in so many families? Why the feelings of hopelessness?

In the margins, next to those prayer requests are the notations — Still Waiting and A Better Understanding Needed.

What seems most obvious to me, as I read through my prayer journals, is that I was trying to work out my faith, to find strength in a spiritual hope. Hope is a powerful thing and when life becomes — a chaotic time of lost control — knowing that I was tethered to God through prayer, gave me encouragement, strength and hope to get up and try again.

We are now in the season of Advent, a most beautiful time to hope. We hope for peace, love and eternal life with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We all hope and pray for many different things and sometimes we see immediate answers to our prayers and sometimes we don't. We're still waiting. Nevertheless, let's just keep acting out our faith in prayer, in hope and in expectation of what is and is to come.

The Apostle Paul in Romans 15 brings us great encouragement ... *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."*

May God bless you and your family, during this season of hope!

Vonda Buse — vonda.buse@gmail.com

**NEXT
TORCH
DEADLINE**

Thursday, December 19th

Email submissions to: mcnallyk@outlook.com
Photos, suggestions and/or comments are greatly appreciated

From the Junior Warden

Wayfinding, Dietel Hall Entry and Landscape Project Status

“Campus Wayfinding” – This is part of the BC Mutual Ministry Goal (MMG) of “making St. Aidan’s more welcoming.” The Bishop Committee (BC) approved the funding of a new directional sign to help new comers find their way around our grounds.

Dietel Hall Entry & Bathrooms – The BC approved the plans to remodel Dietel Hall. The plan includes removing and replacing bathroom doors, sink, vanity, mirror, light, fan, toilet, wall paneling and floor. Replace entry kitchen floor to match bathroom. Remove and replace molding around doors and floor, update lighting in entry way, fix the ceiling and repaint. This work will begin mid-January – early February.

Landscape – Lankford Landscape Design (Scott Lankford) presented a plan to revitalize our landscape. The focus right now is the front space. Some of the boxwoods around the entry sidewalk have been removed and replanted along the sidewalk by the library and the well house. The bell will get a new tower and be moved to the southwest end of the fire line, on the choir door side. 10 trees, provided by PUD, will be planted along the south property line where the trash can enclosure and chain link fence are. Low voltage lighting will be installed on the entry sidewalk, underneath the ramp rail. Additional landscape lights will be installed to light the three fir trees in the front and the tree near the office deck.

Marilynn Rockwell, Helen Demoyse, Patty Dunphy and I are available to answer questions about revitalization plan.



2025 Planned Entryway Look

Greg Myer continued his battle with leaves and pond water accumulation around the Columbarium. Kevin King, our in-house Bunn coffee maker technician, cleaned and adjusted the coffee maker. Patty Dunphy and Julie Vaux cleaned up the library to make room for 4 new file cabinets acquired by JoAnn Moffett. Joey Sontheimer, our in-house muscle, helped moved the cabinets from JoAnn’s van into the library. Thanks to all of you for knocking some items off the to-do list.

Peter Dunphy

One Parish One Prisoner

Dear friends a couple of months ago an article in the Diocese web site caught my attention called One Parish One Prisoner (OPOP). I was curious so I attended a zoom presentation for the Diocese hosted by Dexter Kearney a Presbyterian Minister from Southwest Washington and the Parish Mobilizer for OPOP.

The presentation piqued my attention and I spoke with Father Drew who was also very interested. We organized a zoom call with Vonda, Father Drew and myself. Dexter walked us through some of the basics and of building a team of 7-10 community members. We felt it was worthwhile to explore further and we talked with the Bishop’s Committee where it was warmly received.

As described on the OPOP web site:

One Parish One Prisoner pairs your congregation with someone releasing to your area and guides your team (including your Pastor) through a two-year journey of relationship building release planning and holistic reentry support together.

We are planning a meeting with a leader from OPOP who can give us more detail about the program and next steps. Of course, we as a community need to decide if this is right for us.

That meeting would take place on Sunday, January 12, 2025, at 3:30pm at St Aidan’s.

I leave you with a quote taken from the OPOP web site:

“It’s the reality of personal relationships that saves everything” - Thomas Merton.

If you are interested in more information, OPOP has a really good web site. undergroundministries.org

Blessings—Rob

114th Diocesan Annual Convention

The 114th annual convention took place Friday and Saturday, October 25-26, 2024, at the Greater Tacoma Convention Center. Those gathered participated in workshops and a plenary with Bishop Phil LaBelle centered on how congregations can become the communities we long for and make a difference in our lives and in our world. St Aidan's was represented by Fr Drew Foisie, Jim and Kathy McNally (Delegates), and Dave Wood (Alternate).

Convention members heard reports from the [diocesan treasurer](#), the [Personnel Commission](#), the [Standing Committee](#), and the [Racial Justice Task Force](#). Changes to parochial reports were reviewed, and a report on our 2023 resolution to the General Convention regarding enhanced access to the denominational health plan was heard. Our Episcopal Relief and Development coordinator also provided an update, and the Saint Mark's Cathedral dean spoke briefly to those gathered.

Convention Resolutions with Actions

Resolution 1 – 2026 Diocesan Assessment Rate (adopted as submitted).

Sets the 2026 diocesan assessment rate factor at 14.5% of the Net Disposable Income (NDI).

Resolution 2 – Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to Clergy Salary Scale for 2025 (adopted as submitted)

Sets the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for 2025 parochial clergy salary scale and Office of the Bishop staff salary scale at 3.8%. 2025 Parochial Clergy Salary Scale will be available on the diocesan website.

Resolution 3 – A Call to the Church for Action Toward Ceasefire and a Just Peace in Israel and Palestine (postponed indefinitely with 176 voting in favor of postponing, and 143 opposed).

Courtesy Resolutions were read and adopted as submitted.

Updates to the Constitution & Canons

Proposals from the Committee on Constitution & Canons were adopted as submitted. A new version of the Constitution & Canons of the Diocese of Olympia will be published in early 2025.

2025 Diocesan Operating Budget

The 2025 diocesan operating budget, adopted by the Diocesan Council in August 2024, was ratified as presented.

Other Convention Events and Actions

Videos were shared of a [Youth Sailing Trip](#), [St. Luke's, Seattle: Building a Place Where Love Dwells](#); and [New Life: From St. George to Thornton Creek Commons](#).

Mission Station: The bishop recognized St. Michael South Sudanese Episcopal Church in Auburn as a new Mission Station in our diocese and recognized the Rev. Mary Bol as its vicar.

Bishop's Cross awards: Bishop LaBelle presented the newly designed bishop's cross to Mary McClellan-Aronen, Good Shepherd, Federal Way; Constance Lightbody, St. John's, Kirkland; Mary Pneuman, St. Thomas, Medina; and, posthumously, to the Rev. Jerry Shigaki. [Read the citations and watch the presentations here](#).

The 2025 annual convention is scheduled for Saturday, October 25, 2025, and will be fully online. A Convene event in Spring 2025 is being scheduled as well with details available in early 2025.



For a full report, including results of elected and appointed positions, visit the Convention home page on the Diocese of Olympia website ([Convention Home - Diocesan Convention](#))

Need reimbursement for St Aidan's expenses incurred in 2024?

Please submit your Check Requisition Forms before Monday, December 16th (if at all possible). Forms are available in the Parish Office.

This will be a great help in settling accounts by the end of the year.

Important Events at St Aidan's in December

December 1	Feed My Sheep Sunday	
December 14	Christmas Bake Sale and Bazaar, 9-2pm	
December 15	Still, A Christmas Concert , 7pm	
December 22	Cookies & Carols , delivering cookies and joy to the homebound, 12:30pm	
December 24	Christmas Carols, 8:30pm; Christmas Eve "Midnight" Mass, 9pm	
December 25	Christmas Day Service, 10am	

See calendar on page 6 for more activities and events at St Aidan's. Check weekly ePistle for any adds or updates.

St Aidan's Cold Weather Shelter

We are resuming our St Aidan's Cold Weather Shelter (CWS) outreach efforts again this winter. The CWS hosts up to (12) people overnight in Dietel Hall on the 2nd or greater consecutive night below 32F. Guests sleep on cots with sheets, blankets, pillows and towels provided for their use. Snacks and beverages are available in the evening and a hot breakfast casserole is served the following morning.

We recently completed a meeting with our CWS Steering Committee (Kevin King, Donna Myers, Peter Dunphy and Kusum Batey) where we inventoried our support items and procedures and declared ourselves ready to go! That was followed by an email to all past volunteers providing them as head-up that we are resuming our efforts this winter and are seeking their continued support.

A quick refresher of how the process works.

- CWS Steering Committee monitors future weather looking for two consecutive nights below 32F
- CWS Volunteer Coordinator sends out volunteer requests via of email including a link to Signup Genius for each night the shelter is open
- Interested volunteers for overnight support sign-up via Signup Genius for either 1st Shift or 2nd Shift positions (3 for each shift)
- 1st Shift Volunteers arrive at 7pm and prepare for guests
- 2nd Shift Volunteers arrive at 1am. Serve hot breakfast and cleanup in the AM
- CWS guests depart no later than 7AM

Note: Church schedule takes priority over CWS scheduling

While we had sufficient volunteer support last year, we can always use more. Areas where we could use additional help are as follows:

- 1st Shift Volunteer (7PM to 1 AM)
- 2nd Shift Volunteer (1AM to 7AM)
- Breakfast Casserole Preparer (casserole that can frozen and reheated)
- Soup Preparer (soup that can be frozen and reheated)

If you are interested, please contact me via phone/email/face2face.

Kevin King

206-867-2744, Kevinaking16@gmail.com



Patty Dunphy	10	Carol McRae	22
Joy Strain	11	Judy Bingay	23
Chrissa Berggren	16	Bill Lee	30
Mary McConaughy	21		



Coffee Hour After Sunday 10am Service

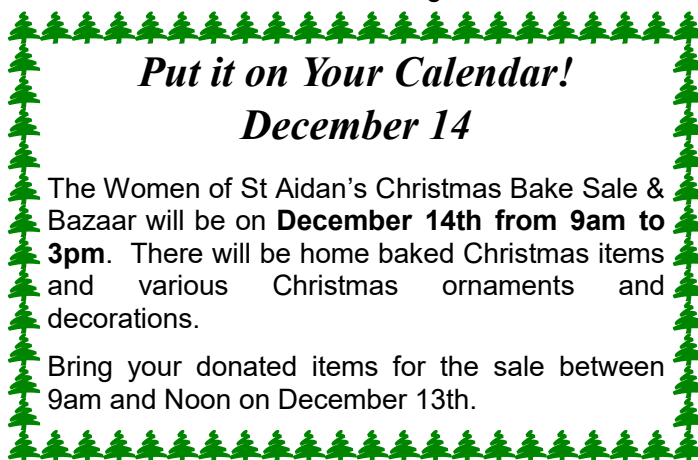


If it is your Sunday consider bringing a light snack—sweet or savory to share during coffee hour.

First Sunday (December 1)	A-D
Second Sunday (December 8)	E-L
Third Sunday (December 15)	M-R
Fourth Sunday (December 22)	S-Z
Fifth Sunday (December 29)	All

If it is your week to host please stay to help clean up after Coffee Hour and take all leftover food home each week.

The last to leave? Please check to make sure the front door is locked before leaving.



Put it on Your Calendar!

December 14

The Women of St Aidan's Christmas Bake Sale & Bazaar will be on **December 14th from 9am to 3pm**. There will be home baked Christmas items and various Christmas ornaments and decorations.

Bring your donated items for the sale between 9am and Noon on December 13th.



Is Your Photo Missing?

Help us update our directory. If your photo missing from our church directory or needs updating please let Ann Boid (apbrrb041539@gmail.com) know or contact the church office so we can make sure you are included.

You can also request a printed copy of the directory.

Food Bank Sunday (December 1st)

"Feed My Sheep"



Collections are on the first Sunday of the month. If not attending services you can drop off donations on the porch the first Saturday or Sunday of the month.


Thank you for your donations.



Edward Wurtz & Gayle Thomas	20
Jim & Kathy McNally	21
Dave & Sue Wood	27

December 2024—Activities Calendar*

*Check for status on St. Aidan's website, current ePistle or with organizers of specific groups for updates.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The First Sunday of Advent 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube) Food Bank Sunday	5:30 pm AA	10:30 am Study Group	10:00 am Holy Eucharist I			7 pm AA
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
The Second Sunday of Advent 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube)	5:30 pm AA	10:30 am Study Group	10:00 am Holy Eucharist I			9 am—2 pm Christmas Bake Sale and Bazaar 7 pm AA
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
The Third Sunday of Advent 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube) 7:00 pm Still, A Christmas Concert	2024 Check Requisition Forms Due 4 pm Bishop's Committee 5:30 pm AA	10:30 am Study Group	10:00 am Holy Eucharist	TORCH DEADLINE		7 pm AA
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
The Fourth Sunday of Advent 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube) 12:30 pm Cookies & Carols for the Homebound	5:30 pm AA	Christmas Eve 8:30 pm Carols 9:00 pm Christmas Eve Midnight Mass	Christmas Day 10:00 am Christmas Day Holy Eucharist I 			10:00 am Prayer Shawl Ministry
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
The First Sunday after Christmas Day 8:00 am Morning Prayer 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube)	5:30 pm AA	New Years Eve 10:30 am Study Group	New Years Day 10:00 am Holy Eucharist I			7 pm AA



Altar Servers



If you cannot serve on your assigned day please find a substitute and let the office know.

8:00 AM	December 1	December 8	December 15	December 22	December 29
Lector	Ann Morgan	JoAnn Moffett	Kathy Hosley	Ann Morgan	JoAnn Moffett
Chalice Bearer	JoAnn Moffett	Ann Morgan	Ann Morgan	JoAnn Moffett	Ann Morgan
Acolyte	Jim Miller	Jim Miller	Jim Miller	Jim Miller	Jim Miller
Usher	Terra Stang-Johnson	Kathy Hosley	Terra Stang-Johnson	Kathy Hosley	Kathy Hosley
10:00 AM	December 1	December 8	December 15	December 22	December 29
Lector	Dick Philmlee	Candy Trautman	Jeff Maxwell	Nancy Pates-Riches	Rhoda Venditto
Chalice Bearer	Jackie Humes-Fear Bob Perry	Kara Hunt Peter Dunphy	Freda McKeown Bob Perry	Theresa Strain Bob Perry	Jeff Maxwell Mary McConnaughey
Acolyte	Bob Perry	Peter Dunphy	Bob Perry	Bob Perry	Mary McConnaughey
Usher	Dick Bingay Joey Sontheimer	Karole Gorman Rob Gorman	Ethel Maxwell Bill White	Susie Johnson Jeff Johnson	Suellen Eberhart Marshall Eberhart
Counter	Julie Vaux Jackie Humes-Fear	Patty Dunphy Pam Sontheimer	Sue Perry Marilyn Rockwell	Sue Perry Kathy McNally	Kathy Hosley Marilyn Rockwell
Childcare	JoAnn Moffett Marilyn Rockwell	JoAnn Moffett Donna Myer	Deb Hubenthal Gayle Thomas	JoAnn Moffett Patty Dunphy	JoAnn Moffett Sue Perry

Special Services	December 24 Christmas Eve	Christmas Day 10 am
Lector	Jackie Humes-Fear	Ann Morgan
Chalice Bearer	Kara Hunt Mary McConnaughey	Freda McKeown
Acolyte	Mary McConnaughey	Jim Miller
Usher	Ethel Maxwell Bill White	Kathy Hosley



Altar Guild Teams for December

December 1-15

Team 3: Susie White, Susan Yerkes,
Micki-Jo Palmer

December 16-31

Team 4: Jan Donovan, Karole Gorman,
Bec Maxwell, Vonda Buse

St. Aidan's Technology Issues?

If you have an questions or concerns about the operation of St. Aidan's website, Facebook pages, or YouTube please contact Allen Feris.

Feris_allen@msn.com or by phone at 425-870-2622

Need Help?



If you need help please contact
Ray Riches

Thank you, Thank you

Dear friends this month we are thanking our community twice over for the generosity shown to the local communities that surrounds us.

One: Thank you for donating toiletries and other goodies to the Seattle Seafarers Center for the Christmas Ditty Bag collection. These donations make all the difference to Seafarers from all over the world as they bring goods into our ports and into our lives.

The Seafarers spend months at sea far from home and families, so any gift, especially at Christmas makes all the difference to their lives.

We will give a full report of our Seafarers Mission in our yearly report in January.

Two: Karole and I delivered the St Aidan donation from the outreach committee to the Stanwood Camano Food Bank. These funds were raised at the Festival so whether you donated goods, worked the day of the festival, humphed* around furniture or served donuts. You played a big part in making our yearly festival a success, thank you! And folks at the food bank think you rock.

We happened to deliver the check when most of the staff of the food bank were meeting and whom Karole and I know so it was fun to be there when they opened and received the gift from St Aidan's.

The St Aidan's community is blessed with a generous spirit and it is recognized throughout our area from cool signs to the largest yard sale most people have ever seen to the local volunteering that many of us participate in. Our mission of "Loving God, Transforming Lives and Serving Others" is alive and well

Blessings, Rob & Karole *[humph, hump: the act of carrying a heavy burden. [Humph.](#) | [Scottish Words Illustrated](#)]



ST. AIDAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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