

December 2025

THE TORCH

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

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From the Rector

The new year is a peculiar thing when it comes to the Church. Perhaps it's because it always begins a month early! The liturgical calendar reaches its culmination (very fittingly) on Christ the King Sunday and begins anew with the first Sunday of Advent. The Daily Office lectionary shifts from year 1 to year 2 and the Revised Common Lectionary moves from year C to year A. If over the last three years you read or heard all the lessons on all Sunday mornings you will have (almost) read the entirety of the Bible. Now we begin again. And this may be the best part of the ecclesial new year, the opportunity to begin anew well ahead of the Gregorian calendar — not ending your year with Christmas, but starting afresh with it.

Advent is unique in its scope and shape. It's different from all the other liturgical seasons. As soon as it arrives I feel a slight twinge of guilt arise within me. A pull from deep inside moves me to start retrieving the Christmas decorations from the loft in the garage and begin unboxing them all. I want to pull out the green garlands with the integrated Christmas lights and stretch them across the mantle immediately. I want to locate the collection of Santa figurines and set them out on the window sill in ascending order according to the height of each. I want to lay my hands on the snow man soap dispenser for the bathroom, the trio of nordic elves that go on the shelf, the green and red candles of all shapes and sizes, the stockings with our initials on them, and of course the Christmas tree. As soon as Advent comes it feels like "game on" for all things Christmas. And I'm all for it! Yet, at the same time, there is this sense that maybe I should be more circumspect. Maybe there is some hidden grace in not being swept up in the Christmas mayhem quite so swiftly, so early, and so completely.

There is no one size-fits-all approach to anything in life, but especially Advent. Some are so absolutely committed to keeping Advent the "right" way that they swear off all Christmas music, hymns and carols until December 24th. And breaking that discipline feels like sinning. Others roll into Advent with a Christmas-started-on-black-Friday attitude. Advent? Isn't that just a calendar for counting down the days until Christmas?! But as a good Anglican who approaches all things within a "via media" (middle way) ethos I believe the best Advent is found in neither of these extreme approaches, but in a third way.

Advent is both a semi-penitential season that invites reflection and a joyful season of anticipation. Can one do both without compromising the depth and goodness of the other? Yes. Not only is it possible, it is necessary and obligatory. Advent is a gift. A gift before the gift of Christmas. Many have experienced this in various analogous ways. I can't help but think of my mother-in-law during the weeks prior to our holiday visits. Much of her joy comes before our arrival from the anticipation and preparation itself. If, however, she over prepares with too much exuberance she's exhausted when we arrive. But just the right amount seems to deepen her love for her family and transform the time we have together when we arrive.

So, I say go a little crazy! But allow Advent to bless you by drawing you deeper into contemplating the wonder of the Christ child. The sacred mystery of our loving God who became flesh, who became vulnerable in a manger *and* on a cross, is worth slowing down for.

However you come to Advent this year may you experience the joy of the season and the blessing of God who loves you beyond measure.

Yours in Christ,
Drew+



From the Senior Warden

December?!?

How did we get here so fast? Just when we all got used to writing 2025, we'll have to start with 2026! The older we get, the more we realize that time is a precious commodity, and it seems like we feel that way the most in December. So many tasks need to get done in such a short time. So many expectations coming from all directions.

Before I retired, it seemed like it took forever to get from New Year's Day to summertime, but summer to year-end always flew by in a heartbeat. Summer vacations were ending, kids needed to get ready to get back to school, holidays came and went, and, at least in my line of work, year-end deadlines loomed large. There weren't enough hours in the day to finish everything.

But these days, the whole year seems to be over before we know it. January to March might **seem** a little slower with the dark days and post-Holiday lull, but the days fill up and speed by, just the same. When I look back on the calendar at all the events of this year, it's no wonder it went by so fast. Bob and I were blessed to be able to travel to exotic places, and see old friends and family in familiar settings as well. We moved into a new house, and were able to sell our prior home very quickly without any problems. When we weren't traveling (or moving!) my regular weekdays were filled with exercise classes, volunteer work, as well as with my activities here at St. Aidan's.

Yes, the year zoomed by... maybe for you too... but the Christian calendar gives us a gift these last few weeks: the season of Advent. It gives time to pause, step out of the daily rush, and reflect on what the season means to us. Different families may have different traditions during this time. Some, even those without small children, may open a door each day on an Advent Calendar. My granddaughters, aged 5 and 8, insist on chocolate treats inside each door! I like to take this time to write a few cards each day to family and friends we don't see very often, slowly start decorating, listening to Christmas music, and lighting candles in the evening.

Many of you probably remember the musical, "Godspell" from the 70's. One of my favorite songs from that play/movie is "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord." The song is sung by the character, John the Baptist, who was sent to prepare the way for Jesus. I usually listen to it several times during this season of Advent. It's a joyful call to action, and celebrates the anticipation of the birth of Christ, the Greatest Gift of all.

Candi Bialon

From the Junior Warden

To make moving through Dietel Hall and our campus easier, St Aidan's has made some small changes. First, we have created a second designated "Visitor" parking spot for newcomers. Second, we now have two standing signs to direct new people through Dietel Hall, during our services when our greeters are attending church.



Third, one of our tables in Dietel Hall has been removed to allow for more space within the room. If you have further suggestions as how we can improve our campus navigation, please let me or Candi Bialon know your thoughts.

Marilyn Rockwell



Community Outreach

In a powerful demonstration of our community support, five key organizations—each playing a crucial role in providing essential services to our neighbors—have been gifted **\$2,200 each**, totaling an outstanding **\$11,000 distributed**.

The organizations receiving a **\$2,200 grant** are:

- **Camano Center:** Dedicated to enriching the lives of seniors and the wider community through programs, resources, and social connection.
- **Brigid Collins Family Support Center:** Providing crucial services to protect children and prevent child abuse and neglect in our region.
- **Community Resource Center of Stanwood-Camano (CRC):** Serving as a central hub for social services, housing assistance, and various programs to support local families in need.
- **Stanwood-Camano Food Bank:** Working tirelessly to combat hunger by providing nutritious food to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity.
- **Safe Harbor:** Offering a safe, confidential place and critical services for survivors of domestic violence and their children.

Our annual Festival is a celebration of community, and the distribution of these funds, now officially approved by the Vestry, is the culmination of that spirit. The Festival Distribution **Outreach committee** are profoundly grateful to everyone who helped us raise these funds, allowing us to support the incredible and vital work being done by these five organizations.

The support for these organizations directly impacts the lives of our neighbors, reinforcing the parish's mission: **Loving God, Transforming Lives and Serving Others.**

HELP WANTED 😊

Hello friends!

If you like to brighten someone's day with a card or note, this ministry is for you! Our little card ministry sends cards to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries to every member of St. Aidan's. We are so grateful for Jeff and Susie Johnson, who have been faithful card senders over the years and are now ready to pass the torch starting January of 2026.

Please reach out and let me know if you'd like to join us.

With gratitude...

Sue Perry

Perrys123@gmail.com

425.773.2022

Important Events at St Aidan's in December

December 6	Still, A Christmas Concert at 5pm
December 7	Feed My Sheep Sunday
December 13	Women of St Aidan's Christmas Bake Sale
December 22	Cookies & Carols for the Homebound, 12:30pm
December 24	Christmas Eve, Carols start at 8:30pm with Christmas Eve "Midnight Mass" following at 9pm
December 25	Christmas Day, Eucharist Service at 10am



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

OPOP Update

Dear Friends,

It is with regret that we report that our One Parish One Prisoner (OPOP) team has stepped back from the One Parish One Prisoner organization. We as a team felt this was best, due to issues with the OPOP organization.

This decision did not come easily, our team met many times over the weeks leading up to our decision. We met with the OPOP leadership, including the Chair of the Board, but could not get our issues addressed. Perhaps another time and another St Aidan's team can make it work, just not at the moment.

Some in our team are still in contact with our incarcerated friend Carri and will continue to do so. We are also in contact with the dedicated group that supports Carri.

The team wants to thank the St Aidan's community for stepping up and walking with us in this ministry, your prayerful support was really important to Carri and to the team.

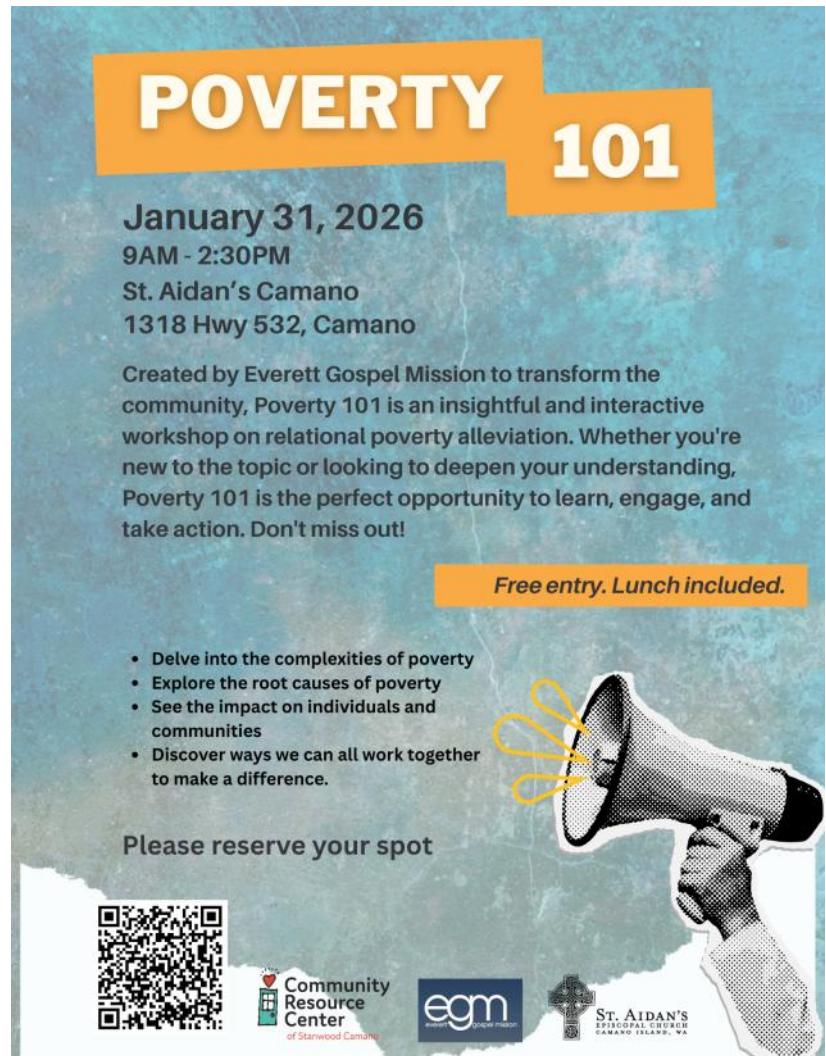
Jesus said, "I was in prison and you came to visit me". Couldn't be clearer!

Peace and Blessings
St Aidan's OPOP Team

Coming to St Aidan's in January

St Aidan's will be hosting this free event on Saturday, January 31. Space is limited. This will be open to others in the community so if you are interested in attending reserve your spot. Use the QR code on the poster to register or search for the event on the Eventbrite website. A poster is also located in Dietel Hall.

If you have any questions contact Kusum Batey.



POVERTY 101

January 31, 2026
9AM - 2:30PM
St. Aidan's Camano
1318 Hwy 532, Camano

Created by Everett Gospel Mission to transform the community, Poverty 101 is an insightful and interactive workshop on relational poverty alleviation. Whether you're new to the topic or looking to deepen your understanding, Poverty 101 is the perfect opportunity to learn, engage, and take action. Don't miss out!

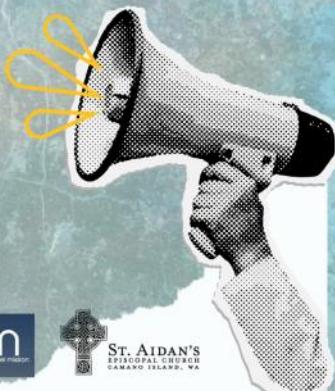
Free entry. Lunch included.

- Delve into the complexities of poverty
- Explore the root causes of poverty
- See the impact on individuals and communities
- Discover ways we can all work together to make a difference.

Please reserve your spot





**NEXT TORCH
DEADLINE**

Thursday, December 18th

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



Calling all Bakers!!!

St. AIDAN'S ANNUAL Christmas Bake sale and gently used Holiday decorations will be held Saturday December 13 from 9am to 3pm in Dietel Hall.

Friday we will accept your baked goodies and set up for the event. Please bring to Dietel Hall between 10 and 3.

Cookies, breads, fudge, pies...all needed

Thank you all in advance to help support this endeavor by baking and coming to shop!

Questions?

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 7) A-D

Second Sunday (December 14) E-L

Third Sunday (December 21) M-R

Fourth Sunday (December 28) S-Z

A reminder:

If you are hosting please stay after Coffee Hour to help clean up Dietel Hall and the kitchen and make sure all leftover food is taken home and take used tea towels and dishcloths home to launder.

Make sure the front door is locked before leaving. If you do not have a key, no problem just lock the front door from the inside and leave by the double doors that lead to the sanctuary.

Your Help and Thoughtfulness Needed!



Please no food or trash in the recycling bins! The transfer station is picky about this kind of thing.

Tuesday 10:30 am—Study Group

The group meets in Dietel Hall or the conference room.

The group will be reading and discussing a book focused on the Advent season during December (selection has not been made at time of printing of Torch). Please check St Adain's ePistle for information on the upcoming reading.

This is a very informal group, stop by and join in the discussions.

Simple greens will be used as altar "flowers" through Advent with poinsettias brought out for the Christmas celebration. If you would like to remember or honor someone with a Christmas poinsettia there will be inserts in the Sunday bulletins beginning the first Sunday in December. Any amount can be given with checks made out to St Aidan's and marked for Christmas flowers.

If you have questions contact the Church Office.



Edward Wurtz & Gayle Thomas
Dave & Sue Wood

20
27



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

Food Bank Sunday (December 7) "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.

December 2025—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
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
The First Sunday in Advent  8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube)	5:30 pm AA	9:45 am Guided Meditation 10:30 am Study Group	10:00 am Holy Eucharist I			5 pm Still A Christmas Concert 7 pm AA
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
The Second Sunday in Advent  8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube) Food Bank Sunday	10am-4pm Bloodworks NW Blood Drive 5:30 pm AA	9:45 am Guided Meditation 10:30 am Study Group	10:00 am Holy Eucharist I		10 am—2 pm Set-up for Bake Sale	9 am—3 pm Christmas Bake Sale and Bazaar 7 pm AA
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
The Third Sunday in Advent  8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube)	4 pm Vestry Meeting 5:30 pm AA	9:45 am Guided Meditation 10:30 am Study Group	10:00 am Holy Eucharist I	TORCH DEADLINE		11:00 am Memorial for Gary Norman 7 pm AA
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
The Fourth Sunday in 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	9:45 am Guided Meditation 10:30 am Study Group	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 7 pm AA
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
The First Sunday after Christmas 8:00 am Holy Eucharist I 10:00 am Holy Eucharist II (also live streamed on YouTube)	5:30 pm AA	9:45 am Guided Meditation 10:30 am Study Group	New Year's Eve 10:00 am Holy Eucharist I	New Year's Day		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	November 30	December 7	December 14	December 21	December 28
Lector	JoAnn Moffett	Kathy Hosley	JoAnn Moffett	Ann Morgan	JoAnn Moffett
Chalice Bearer	Ann Morgan	Ann Morgan	Ann Morgan	JoAnn Moffett	Ann Morgan
Acolyte	Jim Miller	Jim Miller	Jim Miller	Jim Miller	Jim Miller
Usher	Kathy Hosley	JoAnn Moffett	Kathy Hosley	Kathy Hosley	Kathy Hosley
10:00 AM	November 30	December 7	December 14	December 21	December 28
Lector	Jeff Maxwell	Rhoda Venditto	Rob Gorman	Namcy Pates-Riches	Rob Gorman
Chalice Bearer	Mary McConaughey Peter Dunphy	Jackie Humes-Fear Peter Dunphy	Jeff Maxwell Mary McConaughey	Freda McKeown Peter Dunphy	Jackie Humes-Fear Mary McConaughey
Acolyte	Peter Dunphy	Peter Dunphy	Mary McConaughey	Peter Dunphy	Mary McConaughey
Usher	Suellen Eberhart Marshall Eberhart	Joey Sontheimer Dick Bingay	Ethel Maxwell Bill White	Dick Bingay Bill Sontheimer	Susie Johnson Jeff Johnson
Counter	Julie Vaux Patty Dunphy	Julie Vaux Jackie Humes-Fear	Marilyn Rockwell Kathy McNally	Pam Sontheimer Patty Dunphy	Marilyn Rockwell Kathy Hosley
Childcare	Patty Dunphy Sue Perry	JoAnn Moffett Deb Hubenthal	Ethel Maxwell Julie Vaux	Vonda Buse Donna Myers	Kathy Hosley Marilyn Rockwell
	November 30	December 7	December 14	December 21	December 28
Altar Flowers	Mary McConaughey	Marilyn Rockwell	Lucy Armstrong Gloria Archambault	JoAnn Moffett	Gayle Thomas

Special Services	December 24 Christmas Eve, 9 pm	Christmas Day 10 am
Lector	Jackie Humes-Fear	JoAnn Moffett
Chalice Bearer	Freda McKeown Peter Dunphy	Ann Morgan
Acolyte	Peter Dunphy	Jim Miller
Usher	Dick Bingay Bill White	Kathy Hosley
Altar Flowers	Mary McConaughey	



Altar Guild Teams for December

December 1-15

Team 1: : Patty Vermilye, Freda McKeown, Donna Myers

December 16-31

Team 2 & 3: Judy Bingay, Gayle Thomas, Candi Bialon, Susie White, Micki-Jo Palmer

St. Aidan's Technology Issues?

If you have any 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 the church office.

St. Ill

A Christmas Concert

Jeff Johnson

Keys & Vocal

Eliot Grasso

Flute, Whistle & Pipes

Brandon Vance

Violin

Saturday, 12-06-25 at 5pm
St. Aidan's Episcopal Church
Camano Island 98282
\$20 (suggested donation)



www.arkmusic.com

ST. AIDAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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