



Santa and Mrs. Claus made a quick stop before Christmas. They are both personally known by Dick and Diane Dean who suggested to him to drop by. Not only did it give great joy to Carolyn, but to a young mother and her baby who have been using the small coffee room for supervised reunification visits. Thank you Dick and Diane for your ministry of bringing smiles to people's faces during the season of Christmas!

January 2023 Newsletter

WORSHIP

Once again so many people offered helping hands to decorate our church for Christmas! The choir worked very hard for hours every week and the music Christmas Eve was indeed balm for the soul. And there is no moment more beautiful than when the sanctuary is lit only by candlelight as we sing Silent Night.

This coming Sunday, January 1, we'll be doing a service of Christmas Lessons and Carols. It is an opportunity to sing many of our favorite Christmas hymns.

ANNUAL MEETING

Our annual parish meeting will be on January 22nd. It is an important meeting to express our gratitude for so many who have served the church in all kinds of ways, discuss our financial status and budget for 2023, and elect members to some official positions. We'll have worship as usual at 9:30 and after a brief break for some coffee and refreshments, convene the meeting in which those on zoom can participate.

This year we have a number of positions open: Senior Warden, two vestry members, and two delegates. (The position of Treasurer, Clerk, and Jr. Warden are also renewed.) The job descriptions are posted at the end of this newsletter. If you are interested in any of these positions, speak to Carolyn. If there are more candidates than openings for each position, an election by ballot is held. All those who have served in each of these positions feel they have

learned so much and have forged a deeper understanding and commitment to our church and its ministry.

There are also other positions not requiring formal elections, but ones in which team leadership should be rotated: Safe Church, Altar Guild, Property, and the different craft fair areas. Consider working with a leader for a year and then giving it a go yourself. There are many ways to serve!

OUTREACH

Chips : For the first time in several years due to Covid, the diocesan Christmas program for children of incarcerated parents was held again this year. St. David's was very generous and purchasing toys and books. When they were brought to diocesan convention, those loading the collection truck were astounded by how much our little church gave. The gifts were then brought to St. Paul's school, sorted, brought to the prisons where parent chose a toy and a book to give each of their children, wrapped them and gave them to their kids. For some children this was their only toy; and for all, it was an opportunity for parents to maintain family bonds during this time of separation. Thank you all!

January Outreach – Family Promise: Family Promise is an interfaith organization that has been providing transitional housing, meals, case management, financial planning and career development for families with children from Southern New Hampshire for over 17 years. A total of 85% of the families completing the program have remained stable and self-sufficient. An organization we once actively participated in and is worthy of our ongoing financial support.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Advent Series

The Advent series on discussing "A Wholehearted Faith" has turned into a Christmas study! Nine people have been attending and enjoying some very lively and thoughtful conversations.

PROPERTY

High Electric Rates – We are all aware how in November, the electric rates across the state have doubled. In response to this, and with the desire to be good stewards of the earth by making St. David's more energy-efficient, members of "Solar Saints", through funding from the diocesan Earth Care Commission, will be replacing any incandescent light bulbs in the church or rectory with much more efficient LED's. The property committee is also discussing gradually replacing the old florescent ceiling tubes and ballasts throughout the church. A contract with a new electric supplier with lower rates was also signed.

Gutters – New covered gutters were installed along the roof for increased safety and effectiveness.

Sunday School Room – Bob McGilvary and Bob Habeeb made the final repairs of the Sunday School room by building and painting new sturdy shelving. Many of you helped sort, toss, and store supplies for children's activities and the craft fair.

Dead tree removal – The large tree in front of the rectory and one tall pine by Geremonty Extension should be coming down by early January.

JUST FOR FUN

Winter Doldrums Pot-Luck Supper and Yankee Swap – Many years ago a blizzard forced the cancellation of a parish yankee swap which was rescheduled in February. Everyone decided that this fun event was perfect to break up what can feel like a long dark winter. So hold the date of Saturday February 11. More details will come out closer, but in the meantime you may want to keep an eye out for a gift to swap which can be anything – crazy, cheap, edible, nice, funny. Almost every time there is one or two gifts that everyone wants and gets swapped back and forth over and over again. Great night for good food and laughter!

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Vestry

The Vestry is a board of dedicated church lay people, who work with the priest in conducting the business matters of the church, overseeing the care of the property, and being leaders in supporting the life and ministry of the parish. By canon law, the vestry is also responsible for electing and calling a priest when necessary.

Vestry members commit themselves to:

- attend meetings currently on the 3rd Monday from 7-9 PM. (This is free to be changed as works out best for the entire group. There may be special meetings upon occasion.);
- attend an annual vestry retreat (usually a Saturday event);
- Be accessible to parish members to listen to their concerns and advise the vestry accordingly;
- Support the parish and its priest through prayer, attendance at Sunday worship, financial pledge, and being engaged in its ongoing ministry and mission.

Vestry members normally serve a three-year term.

Parish Delegate

Parish delegates are elected lay members representing their parish at area parish meetings and at Diocesan Convention. Delegates learn about and communicate what is happening in the Diocese to the members of their parish and vestry; elect people to some diocesan committees and representatives to General convention; and vote on the diocesan budget and presented resolutions.

Delegates commit themselves to:

- attend meetings of the Southern Convocation (6 times a year usually the 4th Tuesday of the month. Since Covid, most meetings have been via zoom at 6:30pm lasting around an hour. They may (or may not) schedule a couple in-person meetings in the spring or fall to which we can car pool. We don't know yet whether diocesan convention will be a zoom or an in person meeting in early November.);
- attend the annual Diocesan Convention

Parish Delegates normally serve two-year terms.

Senior Warden

In addition to the responsibilities of all vestry members, the Wardens:

- Meets or speaks with the rector on a regular basis to review the life and work of the congregation, plan ahead, and anticipate and resolve problems; and maintain confidentiality where appropriate.
- Provides leadership so the vestry can identify the vision and mission of the congregation, make and implement plans, assess progress, and celebrate achievements.
- Provide leadership in the congregation by demonstrating a consistently positive attitude that seeks to solve problems, recognize accomplishments, and give thanks for those things which build community and further the mission of the Church.
- Be available to discuss any and all concerns with members of the congregation; avoid making hasty judgments; avoid triangles by encouraging complainants to speak to those involved.
- Ensure that policies and procedures are in place and enforced regarding employee and volunteer misconduct; take any questions, concerns, and complaints to the rector and/or appropriate authorities immediately.
- Take action to intervene promptly (with others as appropriate) in the event that the rector is charged with misconduct, has problems with drugs or alcohol or is acting inappropriately; speak with the rector and the bishop.
- Petition the bishop in writing on behalf of the vestry to intervene in cases where conflict imperils the pastoral relationship between the rector and congregation.
- Encourage the rector to take corrective steps as appropriate in cases where the rector is overworked, disregarding her health and well being, or that of her family.
- Assist in identifying persons for leadership roles and participate in inviting them in those roles.
- *In the absence of the rector:* notify the bishop promptly and make provisions for worship services; lead the congregation by ensuring worship services and pastoral needs are met; chairs vestry meetings; maintain employee relations and communication with the diocese; ensure that the selection process for a new rector has begun and submit to the bishop the name of the person proposed to be called as rector 30 days before the election and notify the bishop in writing of the result of the election; and develop a letter of agreement with the new rector which is subject to the bishop's approval

The Wardens are elected by the congregation at the annual meeting with a renewed election each year for a maximum of 5 years.

*A final word as we move into a new year
by Howard Thurman entitled: "The Work of Christmas"*

When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart.

HAVE A BLESSED CHRISTMAS SEASON AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!