



Advent 2024

In Darkness and Light

Advent approaches as days shorten and the darkness of night extends. Imagine the depth of night as Mary carried Jesus in her womb. Lights were made of wicks and olive oil or tallow, dull lights in the darkness that gave off smoke enough to darken the surrounding walls. The wealthiest might have candles burning throughout the night, but not the least. The night was impenetrable and threatening. On top of that, Joseph and Mary were commanded to make a journey to Bethlehem without cruise control or Sirius Radio, or the ability to book a room online. Instead, they needed to stop travelling on each of four or five nights as the sun set, hoping for food, warmth, and safety. These were two people who needed to focus on priorities and not on the expectations of others.

In such darkness we all await the Light of the World. In such spiritual darkness we wait, wondering what will be. We hope and pray as we wait. Is setting our hearts on only the most meaningful priorities a way to be serene in this season of nervous peace? Joseph and Mary had no choice but to focus on absolute priorities; perhaps that is not such a bad idea for us as well. We may be able to do it all. Bake the cookies, stir the molten candy, buy something for each and every person and do it all while maintaining our other responsibilities. Or it may just feel like too much this year. Here is a surprise: It is perfectly OK to lighten up, to make fewer commitments and to do them as well as possible, but not to the degree that all the beauty of the season and the importance of Christ's message is lost in the shuffle, dropping to bed exhausted because our acceleration is too great, for too long, and without enough fuel. It is also OK to do less without carrying guilt. Who knew?

This Advent we will again pull our beautiful blue vestments from the drawer. We will have three quiet sessions of Celtic Evening prayer, lighting candle after candle to face the darkness. In the spirit of coming closer together in community to live our Christianity in a harsher world, we will also be able to gather by Zoom for Contemplative Prayer on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 pm. This is a time to celebrate the "you 'all'" of the New Testament message sharing even deeper peace and mutual support. Let us pace ourselves in the comfort of our anticipated Lord. Let us celebrate the day when God loved us so much that his own Son came to be among us, to love us, to suffer with us, to laugh with us, and to be our strength and hope. A Blessed Advent to you all.

In Christ,

Pastor Kate+



from Pastor Kate

St. David's Episcopal Church

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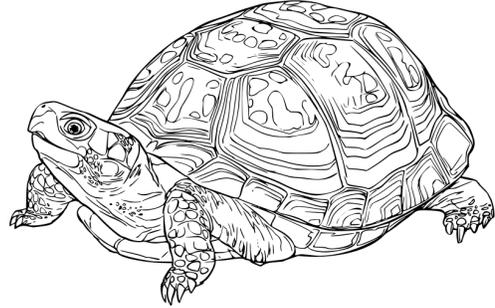
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A Turtle Tale...

You have to wonder what wildlife are thinking when they start out on some kind of inner-driven journey. In this story, a box turtle began his walk from a grassy wooded area on the side of a large used car parking lot in Morgantown. He made it through the parking lot to a sidewalk, somehow getting safely through the parked used cars and then found himself confronted with a 4 inch sidewalk edge drop off. As I was driving by, I looked over and thought, "Holy cow, that's a TURTLE!", there in the middle of nothing a turtle could possibly want. He was standing there, head in the air, contemplating his next move. In front of him was the cement sidewalk drop off, then the roadway and beyond that another sidewalk. This second sidewalk would now be a 4 inch barrier for him that was up, and then there was another parking lot behind the bank which served the bank and a long apartment complex. In other words, a sea of cement.



I couldn't leave him there like that, so I turned the car around, parked across from him and then jumped out, walked over and picked him up. He didn't try to walk off or pull into his shell, just kept head and all legs out as I carried him back to the far-off wooded spot. Since I was now totally wrapped up in saving this cute old turtle, I neglected to shut off the car, close the car door or even take my purse with me. At one point I was totally out of view of the car, but all was well.

I gently put the wandering turtle back down on the grass and he hurriedly scrambled into the underbrush. I think I heard a small sign of relief. I know you're supposed to put a turtle in a safe place in the direction where they are headed but this one needed to realign his trajectory in a very large way. There was no good news for him in the parking lot.

Fast forward three weeks, and I'm in the car with my boyfriend driving on the same road and I'm pointing out where I saw the turtle as we approach the intersection. On the left side of the road, several cars are stopped for no apparent reason and then I see why. When I look down in front of the first car there is that turtle back in the roadway again! (He was pretty distinctive with a yellow-buff coloration) People are jumping out of their cars to come and pick him up before he gets flattened by a vehicle. The last sight I saw was a man in a pink shirt running from the parking lot and picking up Mr. Turtle to carry him off to safety again...

As I was contemplating this whole event, this thought came to me; If you find yourself in a bad spot like the turtle -who is after all another one of God's creatures just like us- help will be sent to you somehow, maybe in unimaginable ways. But also – if your life gets re-directed- especially twice!!!- pay attention, and go another way!!

—Jennifer Heller

All I Want For Christmas

Advent is observed as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the nativity of Christ at Christmas. During the four Sundays of Advent, the scripture readings illuminate the path toward the celebration of Christ's birth giving us hope, peace, love, and joy.

As the Wise Men brought gifts to the Christ Child, the tradition of gift giving has become a means for us at St. David's to spread and share Christ's love, give hope, spread joy and peace to our families and with our neighbors. Eight families have been recommended to us by Centerstone, DCS, Guardian ad litem, and neighbors. Each family member is asked to provide a "wish list" which will be placed on an ornament for our giving tree. We will take an ornament with a name and family number, purchase gifts from their wish list, place name and family number on the gift and wrap it. Then place gifts on the designated family table. Families will be picked-up or be delivered the week of Christmas.

As the families were talking with me, sharing their stories and making Christmas wish lists, I am reminded of a Niednagel story about "what do you want for Christmas?". Before Christmas Tim and Ann would dress-up the grandchildren and take them to the Indiana State Museum for an annual Christmas picture with Santa. One year when Jack, our oldest grandson, was about four years old, he approached Santa, got on Santa's lap and started chatting. Finally Santa looked at Jack and said "what do you want for Christmas?" Jack looked up at Santa and said, quite emphatically: "World Peace".

Although World Peace cannot be wrapped up and put under the Christmas Tree, we can pray and act to bring more hope, peace, joy, and love to our world. "World peace" will be a wish for all of us.

—Donna Niednagel



Episcopal Relief and Development, the national and international relief arm of the Episcopal Church will be presenting an after-church forum about their work around the world on Sunday, December 1. Chad Brinkman, Director of Development for ERD, will also deliver the homily for worship service.

St. David's Outreach has supported this agency annually for many years. From wars, famine and natural disasters, ERD has provided assistance around the world in times of need.

Come and learn more about ERD and how your Episcopal Church helps to be "the hands and feet" of Jesus. If you have questions contact Marilyn Day (mikeandmarylin@gmail.com) or anyone on the Outreach Committee.

Stewardship

During this season of Thanksgiving, we at St. David's are discerning our commitment to stewardship and outreach.

This annual reflection takes on a special meaning of thanking our God for our many blessings. Sharing these blessings with our community and around the world is our Christian responsibility and is always done with love.

St. David's is fortunate to have a very involved Outreach committee and the faithful support of our congregation. Our annual stewardship budget includes about 5% of our operating expenses toward giving, plus numerous fundraising events/donations to enhance our giving to approximately 10%! However, as giving includes time, talent and treasure, each member of our congregation is especially generous of their time and talents. The value of volunteering is immeasurable! And, you can revive your passion for anything you love, be it animals, helping children, assisting seniors, caring for the environment, feeding the hungry, etc. Can you read to a child, raise money for our partner diocese, Brasilia or St. Andre' church in Haiti, donate your time to Habitat for Humanity or typing to update thank you letters for your local community foundation? All are Jesus' hands and feet in our world.

Despite our small size, St. David's continues their tradition of helping and healing in our community, the country and around the world. Love your neighbors as yourselves...that's what it's all about! If you have ideas for successful fundraising to share or are interested in our Outreach programs, please let any member of the Outreach Committee know! Blessings to all and Merry Christmas!

—*Marilyn Day*

Cards from Marilyn

Christmas time is a wonderful way to renew friendships, say hello to your neighbors and send special Christmas cards to all. The Outreach Committee has the cards for you! Hand-made and each unique, they are a perfect way to delight those special people. And, at \$4.00 each (2 for \$7.50), the price is right.

All monies from the card sales goes directly to Outreach, so not only do you make a friend or family member happy when they receive your card, you help your neighbors in Brown County and around the world.



Please note, in 2025 the price for the cards will increase. The cost for food in our Outreach feeding programs has substantially increased in the past couple of years, so we need additional income. Thank you for your continuing support!

—*Marilyn Day*

UTO News

From Jane Savage

St David's United Thank Offering from this October will be sent to the UTO grants committee to be combined with other parish offerings to support the 2025 UTO grants. The practice of gratitude is encouraged throughout the year.

The Canon Heather Melton, Senior Officer United Thank Offering, sent this email letter to contributing UTO parishes.

“Autumn came late to New Mexico this year, as I write this it is finally sweater weather and the cottonwood trees in the Bosque are just beginning to turn from green to gold. All of these subtle changes in the environment around us are ways my soul knows that fall is upon us. Perhaps it is from growing up in a farming community, but these are also cues that life can slow down a bit. (I'm not sure life slows down anymore, but my soul has hope.) Each year, once Halloween is over, our thoughts turn to Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving, in my opinion, is really needed in our families and communities—a day to practice gratitude with our friends, family, community, and world. This month I wanted to share a little bit of information about Thanksgiving and some ways UTO wants to help you put the “thanks” back into Thanksgiving.

In the United States, the official national holiday of Thanksgiving was created in 1863 by President Abraham Lincoln as a day to celebrate gratitude and work toward unity amid the ongoing Civil War. In the proclamation for the holiday, he asked Americans to ask God to “commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife” and to “heal the wounds of the nation.” Prior to this, many states had Thanksgiving holidays that coincided with local events or the harvest, and perhaps the most famous is the narrative that got tied to our Thanksgiving holiday, the 1621 harvest meal shared by Pilgrims and Wampanoag people. Unfortunately, the popularized history of that harvest meal left out the suffering of the Wampanoag and other Indigenous people at the hands of the colonists; and over time, the call to center the day on gratitude, unity, and caring for our community members who have suffered losses in the past year was forgotten. Indigenous leaders have called for reforms to the holiday and the need for Americans to educate themselves regarding the historic events. (The National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., has a great webpage to help with this.)

This year, as Thanksgiving falls a few weeks after the presidential election, the need for Thanksgiving as President Lincoln described it, is relevant in new and profound ways. I've started thinking about ways our gathering can not only be centered on gratitude but also on healing and helping others....”

St. David's has a long history of actively showing gratitude and thanksgiving through the many outreach programs we support locally, nationally, and internationally. I am grateful for your offerings to UTO. I will have a total of our offering at a future date.

—Jane Savage



News from the Choir Corner

from Vicki King, Music Director

We're delighted to welcome Sandy Fittz back to the choir after a long absence. She has proved to be a good and faithful member of the choir.

The choir is looking forward to beginning a new church year with lovely music planned for each service. On December 22nd at the 9:30 a.m. service St. David's will have a traditional Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. The choir will also participate in the Christmas Eve Candlelight service. In this season of Advent we invite you to reflect, be grateful for all your blessings and await the birth of our Savior.



—Vicki King, choir director/organist

Mixed Together

Christmas Cards
and
birthday cards
mixed together in the
card holder

A few days
separate
the
days

Two birthdays-
mine being
the
lesser

but
I've come
to know

I'm
in
Good Company

Phyllis Sindlinger for my 86th birthday
on December 28

And remembering the Other Birthday,
2024 years ago on December 25.

Deacon's Corner

by Rev. William Morris, Jr., Deacon

Journey into Genesis

After following Paul across the Mediterranean from Jerusalem to Rome, the Friday Morning Group decided to start at the beginning: Genesis. And, over the past several weeks, we have sojourned through the incredible histories of Genesis, including: the creation of life on earth; the banishment of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden; the fratricidal story of Cain and Abel; Noah and the Great Flood; the diaspora of Noah's sons – Shem, Ham, and Japheth (including the geographical routes taken by their descendants to repopulate the earth); the Tower of Babel; and God's call for Abram to settle in Canaan.

These stories from Genesis form the foundation of our Biblical faith. Generations of humanity have read these accounts – and accepted them – as literal truth. Some folks today still embrace these stories as literal accounts of true history. Of course, science has stepped into the picture, and the stories of Genesis have largely been dismissed as myths: ancient humanity's quest to answer profound philosophical questions about our origins and humanity's role in this world. Our Friday morning group has worked hard to extract Genesis Truths that we have experienced in our own lives and respective Christian walks: Below are just a few thoughts that we have shared.

The Genesis account of creation is magnificent: Be it literal or myth. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” is breathtaking. And, of course, those words foreshadow the first verse of the Gospel of John: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.” In its personification of Wisdom, Proverbs echoes a similar refrain: “The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old.” It's a wonderful panorama of the power of God.

Transformation can require a complete makeover: The account of the Great Flood can be difficult to read – and nearly impossible to imagine. God is not happy and there is a lot of destruction. Yet, there may be a simple, more palatable lesson: Transformation is a pivotal time in our spiritual lives: this time where an irrevocable change ushers in something new and totally different. And there is no going back. Such is the case in Chapter 5 of the Gospel of John, when Jesus heals a man, unable to walk, who has waited 38 years for healing. After meeting Jesus, sickness, blindness, and infirmity are all washed away, and, like the words of an old gospel song says “He's not the person he used to be.” Nor is the earth after the Great Flood.

With God, all things are possible: In each Genesis story, we have seen humanity place itself in an existential mess: Temptation, disobedience, vanity, and quests for power are just a few of the myriad ways humanity defeats God's purpose. Yet, God reaches out again and again to save us, guide us, and love us: with God, all things are possible.

You are welcome to join us on Friday mornings as we continue our travels into Genesis and beyond. God bless you.



from Pastor Kate

Getting Better Acquainted

The temptation is just more than I can resist. Before I share another word about the subject of this piece, let's see how many St. David's folks can guess who the person is with a few clues--

--The person is one of the original members of St. David's.

--He/she has at one time or another had various position of responsibility within our community --vestry, parish life, outreach, farmer's market, and others yet to be mentioned.

--He/she sometimes has to miss Sunday service because of job duties.--

--He/she is renowned as a GREAT cook.

--And now--THE CLUE THAT WILL GIVE IT AWAY!! He/she has been providing St. David's with a fine newsletter for "pushing on to thirty years now"

If by now you haven't identified Jane Herr as our mystery person, welcome to St. David's we're happy you are joining us and by all means take an early opportunity to meet Jane.

Jane first came to St. David's in her father's arms as the church was being established. In time her father Andy Rogers left us but Jane remained. St. David's is her "church home." And home is a very important concept to Jane.

As she and I talked about what I'd write for this article the word "constancy" kept occurring and reoccurring to me. Jane believes in remaining constant. She is a lifetime resident of Brown County. Her greatest departure from this place she loves was her schooling at University of Indiana. And during that time she attended services in Bloomington. After college she and her husband settled in a home between Bloomington and Nashville. And, one Sunday as she headed out to church, Jane says she "...just turned right" and returned to her home church where she was welcomed warmly ("...especially by Carol Walker."). And luckily for all of us, she hasn't left.

Jane lives a life of commitment. She intentionally offered her sons a home in the place she loves. She values the time she has been able to spend working with her sisters in her father's businesses. She puts lots of energy into the church she loves (and appreciates that it is a place that has lovingly accepted her). She approaches her work as a medical technician as a calling, realizing that what she learns can be life changing for the people she serves.

We at St. David's are truly blessed to have such a constant friend.

—*Jan Drum*

An Update from Jonathan and Deborah

It's been more than ten years since Deborah and I left Brown County and moved back to our beloved New Mexico. We live at 8000' in the Sangre De Cristo mountains (See photo, taken from our backyard). Our front yard looks over a vast high desert valley with two volcanos and, in the distance, the Continental Divide.



Our son Daniel and grandson, Asa (who will be 12, this month), live about 20 minutes away, on the side of another mountain. Our older son, Patrick and his wife, Marinda, will drive out from Minneapolis this week, to help us celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary. Our neighborhood includes a number of friends we've known for fifty years, along with some new ones, particularly Alice Allen, the daughter of Jan and Jim Drum, who lives just down the gravel road. So life is rich.

It is also challenging. Deborah's Parkinson's Disease continues its inexorable progress, with more limitations and distress. But, to no one's surprise, she's tougher than anyone has a right to be. She's recovered her ability to sing, thanks to a special PD vocal exercise class. In fact, she sang a set of her own songs for a gathering, just last week. She continues to offer spiritual direction and is, once again, a published poet. She is much beloved in this community. I've become the house-husband par excellence and Executive Director of the Fall Prevention Program. In my spare time, I serve on the board of our neighborhood volunteer fire department, work on my music and try to save the world by writing things that hardly anyone reads.

We are grateful for the sustaining friendship and prayers of the good people of St. David's, truly one of the greatest little churches in all of Christendom!

—Jonathan Hutchison



Poetry

How Did I Do?

Stressful, too busy and trying
to do too much
Every year I promise myself to
simplify and dwell on
the true meaning
of the season

BUT

I still send an annual letter
to friends and family far away
sharing news

AND

Attend church for the Sundays of
Advent watching as candles
are lighted in anticipation
of the birth of the Christ Child

AND

Memorial poinsettias are
ordered and taken to
the church for Christmas Eve

AND

Cookies are baked as well as
pans of Lasagna, one
for our son who lives alone

AND

We watch holiday movies
and sometimes sit by the fireplace
taking pleasure in each other's company
and enjoying our Christmas tree
decorated with ornaments from our travels -
reminiscing

AND

Take time for the Children's Auction and to
Enjoy a production of The Nutcracker

Entertain friends and neighbors for brunch,
talking and laughing -
remembering how much we
treasure these good people

We will go again with friends to
the Yuletide Celebration
and be surrounded by
delightful music and glitz.

Christmas Eve will find us in church
with dear friends, listening to glorious music
and age-old scripture,
ending with a Candlelight Service

AND

On Christmas day, dine on spaghetti
and open gifts and stockings with our family
who live nearby and face-time with our
daughter and her family- faraway

Stressful, too busy and trying
to do too much

Every year I promise myself to
simplify and dwell on the true meaning
of the season...

BUT WAIT

Just maybe I did after all.

Phyllis Sindlinger
11/17/24



Birthdays and Anniversaries

December

9 Quinn Cole (Bess & Eric's son)
 10 Matt & Denise Fulton (anniversary)
 12 Donna Niednagel
 27 Jim & Jan Drum -(Anniversary)
 28 Phyllis Sindlinger
 29 Deborah Hutchison
 31 Bahati Fulton

January

15 Susie Chestnut
 16 Skip Patchin
 18 Jan Drum
 22 Gordon Smith (son of Ben & Adie Smith)

February

3 Cori McCabe
 4 Mike Day
 5 Jaden Fish (Niednagel's grandson)

7 Logan Fittz
 14 Jane Land
 15 Sandy Fittz
 27 Linda Lee Gosser

March

3 Gail & Danny Fields (Anniversary)
 5 Bob Westbrook
 12 Cynthia Kafoure
 12 Angie Aumage
 14 John Johnson
 19 Theresa Sims
 20 Maddy Fulton
 21 Kyle Fittz
 24 Frank Fulton
 28 Laurie Stant
 28 Bess Smith (Joan Amati's daughter)
 30 Michael Kafoure

Don't see your birthday or anniversary - drop me a line at jane@rjherr.com

Newsletter Submissions?

Please send your news items, stories of spiritual growth, book reviews, jokes, cartoons, recipes, etc. to Jane Herr (812)320-2340 or 4923 Stevens Rd., Nashville, 47448 or (the preferred method!): jane@rjherr.com

Next deadline for submissions:
 Lent: February 15, 2025



from Pastor Kate

St. David's Episcopal Church
 PO Box 1798
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SERVICES

Sunday 9:30 AM Holy Eucharist

Wednesday 5:00 PM Communion

In-person services may be temporarily suspended when Covid cases increase in Brown County. You can attend our worship services via zoom and/or Facebook. Please contact the church office for more information.

Schedule of Special Services and Parish Events

Friday	Nov 22	Zoom Bible study	7:30-9 am	
		<i>(bible study continues Friday mornings)</i>		
Sunday	Nov 24	a Thanksgiving pitch-in to follow service		
Thursday	Nov 28	Thanksgiving Eucharist	9:30 am	St. David's
Sunday	Dec 1	First Sunday in Advent	9:30 am	St. David's
		<i>(after church forum from Episcopal Relief & Development)</i>		
Tuesday	Dec 3	Pub Theology	6:30 pm	Out of Ordinary
Wednesday	Dec 4	Celtic Evening Prayer	5:00 pm	St. David's
		<i>(to continue on Wednesdays through December 18)</i>		
Friday	Dec 6	Euchre	7 pm	St. David's
		<i>(Euchre continues on the 1st Friday of the month)</i>		
Sunday	Dec 15	Vestry meeting after service		
Wednesday	Dec 25	Christmas		
Wednesday	Jan 8	Dinner Church	5 pm	St. David's
		<i>(Dinner Church continues on 2nd Wednesday of the month)</i>		
Sunday	Feb 15	Lent newsletter info deadline		
Wednesday	Mar 5	Ash Wednesday		