

Church of the Advent



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LOSS AND LIFE TOGETHER

The Church of the Advent, Cape May, is blessed with both a well-equipped Parish Hall and Sanctuary proper that are aesthetically appealing, physically accommodating, and historically significant. An essential responsibility of our volunteer Vestry is the stewardship of these buildings and grounds. Those who preceded us, passed on to us a great heritage of attractive and functional space for worship, community service, and parish gathering.

That said, it is fundamentally not these physical assets that make our parish community the welcoming and caring place that it is. What are at the core of our life together are the people, the individuals with whom we have chosen to live our lives, to fulfill our faith, to volunteer our time, to dedicate our service, to worship together, to be known by and to know. It is the people, adults and children, the congregants, the fellow parishioners, our friends and families; it is we who are at the heart of The Church of the Advent.

Our living, working, and serving together often present times of challenge and opportunity, times of fulfillment and times of frustration, encounters of concord and others of divergence, but always the experience of being a part of something larger than any one individual and the certainty of being valued and cared for by others. We all, in our agreeing and in our disagreeing, in our disappointments and in our hopes, we are the living stuff of which our community is made, together as brothers and sisters of God the Father.

As we get to know each other in our working and living together, inevitably there will be loss. In many social contexts in life such as clubs, neighborhoods, and companies, loss primarily takes the shape of people moving on, coming and going to and from other organizations, employers, towns, and schools. That is not the primary shape of our losses here, especially in the loss of older parishioners. Here, when we as a community lose an older member, that loss is often through death. There is no gentle way to phrase it: all of us who have been a part of this community for any length of time have suffered the deaths of close friends and fellow worshipers.

Just because death is as natural as life (and maybe even more certain!) does not mean that we are either comfortable or sanguine over the loss of one significant to our lives'

routines. These losses affect all of us in ways that are both shared and unique, expected and surprising. These losses affect us as parishioners when we lose a pew mate, a reader, a fellow choir, Vestry, ECW, ECM, or Altar Guild member.

In a paradoxical and puzzling way, our community and our life together continue not in spite of such losses but at times almost because of such losses. The memories of those dear to us but no longer in our midst, underscore the deep and certain truth that members may be gone but never forgotten. And it is often in the remembering of those gone before that we are challenged and invigorated anew to craft a compassionate whole out of our many disparate parts, to continuously create our community as a parish family not as an institution, to honor and respect each other for all that we have been and all we will be together.

Remembering and celebrating those who have departed may not be painless, but those remembrances and celebrations of loved ones now gone provide both shared perspective and collective experience. It is just these points of common life amidst our varying needs and diverse histories that can and must unite us together into the strong, supportive, sympathetic, stimulating, and Spirit filled community we know as The Church of the Advent.

--Fr. Doug+

CHRISTMAS LESSONS AND CAROLS

A Service of Lessons and Carols will be held at 3:45 PM on Sunday, December 9. The service will feature choral music by the choirs and bell choirs of the First Presbyterian Church of Cape May, the Episcopal Church of the Advent and friends, congregational singing of familiar carols, and the traditional reading of the biblical Christmas story. The service, modeled on the traditional Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols first held on Christmas Eve in 1918 at King's College Chapel in Cambridge, England, has been described as one that "presents the Christmas story in an ambience of mystery, splendor, hope and joy." As always, a gala reception will be held in the church parish hall following the service.



HELPING TO MAKE CHRISTMAS WISHES COME TRUE

This Christmas season, the Church of the Advent will again be partnering with the Caring for Kids "family to family" community project assisting with Christmas gifts for needy families in Cape May County.

The ornaments with the names and gift requests for the family members are on the trees in the back of the church. **Please choose an ornament, take it home and by Sunday, December 16, bring the wrapped gift to church.** Some ornaments may have more than one item listed or may list a more expensive item. You may want to partner with someone to make the purchase. ***Remember to attach the ornament to the gift. It is of the utmost importance that the number on the ornament and the name of the recipient are on the gift.*** Caring for Kids will pick up the gifts from the church on Monday, December 17. Thank you in advance for opening your hearts and supporting this project.

SERVICES DURING ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

December 9

Second Sunday of Advent

Holy Eucharist 8:00 & 10:30 AM

Lessons & Carols 3:45 PM Reception follows in Parish Hall

December 16

Third Sunday of Advent

Holy Eucharist 8:00 & 10:30 AM

December 23

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Holy Eucharist 8:00 & 10:30 AM

December 24

Christmas Eve 6:30 PM – Carols & Children's Crèche

7:00 PM – Festive Choral Eucharist

December 25

Christmas Day

Holy Eucharist 10:00 AM Only

2019 PLEDGE CARDS

If you have returned your pledge cards, your 2019 envelope boxes are in the rear of the church. If you have not returned your pledge card for the financial support of the parish, please bring it or send it to the church office as soon as possible. Envelopes have been prepared for all who returned pledge cards. If you have not pledged but would like envelopes, please contact the office at 609-884-3065 or adventsecretary@comcast.net.

Notes from the ECM

The next breakfast meeting of the ECM will be Tuesday, December 4. The meeting begins at 8:30 AM, with coffee ready by 8:00 AM. The cost is \$5.00 and all men of the parish are invited.

Notes from the ECW

The Episcopal Church Women will hold their next meeting on Thursday, January 18, 2019 at 10:30 AM in the Parish Hall. Remember, all women of the church are members of ECW and all are invited to participate.

2018 Pledge Payments A reminder – to qualify for a 2018 tax deduction, all pledge payments for 2018 must be received in the church office prior to December 31, 2018.

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

The ECW is sponsoring a Christmas Luncheon for all church members on Tuesday, December 13, at 12:30 PM at The Washington Inn. Each person may also invite one guest. The cost is \$20.00 and entree choices are: Southern Style Pork Chop, Mahi Mahi or Vegetarian. For reservations contact Carol Obligado (609-898-9699) or cobligado@aol.com before December 5th.



Cookies, cookies, cookies:

We need lots of cookies for our annual hosting of the MAC House Tours on Saturday, December 1. Please make an extra batch when you are doing your holiday baking and put it in the freezer for the tour. Bring them to the church the week before, but label them so that they don't get mixed up with the baked goods for the bazaar. Thanks

SEAFARERS WISH LIST

- Knitted Hat & Scarf
- Razor & Shaving Cream
- Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- Shampoo & Comb
- Work Socks & Work Gloves
- Deodorant
- Mini Sewing Kit
- Pen & Stationary

Please do not send mini sizes

Founded in 1843, the Seamen's Church Institute (SCI) serves the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of 35,000 visiting seafarers on 1,500+ ships docking at terminals along the Delaware River in PA and NJ on a yearly basis. Every December SCI's chaplains and ship visitors distribute around 2,200 Christmas Ditty Bags to the merchant mariners who will be at sea during the Christmas Holidays. Our Ditty Bags bring real joy to the brave men who spend 9-10 months at sea bringing us the things we need for our everyday lives. For some, this is the only Christmas gift they receive. Imagine your Christmas morning...far away from your family, friends and familiar surroundings. Now, imagine how happy it would make *you* to find a bag of necessities, packed by people sharing in God's love, on Christmas morning! We hope you will be able to help our seafarers.

Please place your donations in the box in the church vestibule by December 9.



CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Envelopes for Christmas flower donations and dedications are in the pews and on the table in the Parish Hall. You may also use the form below to indicate the dedication for your memorial/thank offering. Place the form with your donation in the collection plate or mail it to the parish office. The deadline for including the names of loved ones or thank offerings in the Christmas bulletin is, December 20, 2018.

Christmas Flowers
In Memory of:

In Thanksgiving for:

Enclosed is a check made payable to Church of the Advent Altar Guild for \$_____.
Your Name(s):

VESTRY MEETING DECEMBER 16 AT NOON IN THE UPPER ROOM

