



Pastor Maxine's Weekly Message November 20, 2021

Dear Sojourners,

We will gather this Sunday to celebrate the close of this Church year. Over the years this Sunday has become known as “Christ the King Sunday” and it is a time that invites us to look back over the year that has just passed and give thanks that our God is ruler over all. It also invites us to pray for the unity of all creation.

It also is a reminder that our **Stewardship Campaign** is winding down. It is the hope that each one of us would prayerfully consider making a pledge to fund the ministries of the year 2022. Every pledge makes a difference – from the largest to the smallest. It would be a powerful message of unity if 100% of our members made a pledge – no matter the size. With that kind of unity – we can change the world. You may make pledges online, if that is more convenient, by going to our website - [click here](#).



The pledges will be used to plan our budget for next year. In addition to our monetary pledges, your thoughts and dreams about the future of St. Paul’s and the ministries that we support are also very important as we rebuild post-pandemic. Our Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Daniel Gutierrez has given us a plan called **“Casting Nets: Start-up Plan for Churches”** to help us get started. We begin with a question: I would like for the community of St. Paul’s to - fill in your own ideas. A few of you have let me know that you would like to be part of the conversation that helps us build a future that incorporates the lessons we have learned during the last 18months. Please let me know if you have ideas that you would like to offer.

In addition to planning our future. We need to deal with the present by inviting all those who would like to be part of our worship services – **as Acolyte, Lector, Usher, Flower Guild, or sing in the Choir** – please let me know or call the office to volunteer. Don’t worry if you have participated in any of the ministries, we offer great training. In the near future you will receive an invitation to meet with and contribute to plans for the **Outreach Committee** and the **Garden/Environmental Committee**. Many ideas for outreach came out of the ECS Forum in October and we will be looking at how we might respond; and the current discussion on global warming has presented possibilities that we might be able as a community to do to make our environment healthier.

Last week I proposed that you might want to consider shopping from home by doing your Christmas shopping online by giving a gift to a worthy charity in the name of a friend. Those charities included: **Home of the Sparrow, St. James Episcopal School,**

Pathways and The Heifer Project. (Contact the office if you would like more information on any one of these.)

I would like to add two more worthy project for your consideration:

Episcopal Community Services (ECS) ECS plans to provide \$25 gift cards to the 600 children in their “Out-of-School Time” Program. Contributions need to reach ECS before **December 10**. To participate in Christmas gift card drive you can choose from the following options:

Send a check with “Christmas Gift Cards” in the memo line to:

Episcopal Community Services
225 S. 3rd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Make an online donation via our website:

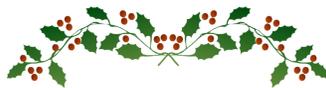
<https://ecsphilly.org/support/donate/>

List "Christmas Gift Cards" in the Comments box below your credit card Information.

The second is **Hosts for Hospitals** – an organization that tries to help people who have come to hospitals for surgery or treatment in Philadelphia and surrounding areas that need a home in which they might stay for a short period of time. Transportation and food are not needed - just a place to stay. The director of the program (Cathy Davis – a member of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Chestnut Hill) has contacted us and asked that if anyone has a spare room or are traveling over the holidays and might be willing to offer a place to stay. Let me know if this is something you might be able to do and I will put you in contact with Cathy.

Mark your calendar:

- **Book Club** will be meeting on Monday night, November 22, at 7:00 PM via Zoom. The book being discussed is *“The Wisdom to Know the Difference: When to Make a Change – and When to Let Go”* by Eileen Flannagan. Joanne Gillespie will be leading the discussion which is covering a topic that should speak to every one of us. Just let me know if you wish to receive a link for the session.
- *“Living Well Through Lent: Practicing Patience with All Your Heart, Soul, Strength and Mind”* – will meet - for the first session of four – on Saturday, November 27th at 10:30 AM. A book of daily devotionals is available in the office if you would like to make this a part of your Advent preparation for Christmas. It is a zoomed meeting – so just call the office if you wish to be included.



Upcoming Christmas Event Concerts:

- The **Main Liners** will getting us in a celebratory spirit by offering two concerts of Christmas music on Sunday, Dec. 5, in the Church Sanctuary. The first concert will begin at 2:00 PM and the second is at 4:00 PM. There is no entry fee but the concerts are limited to 140 attendees. You may reserve a seat by calling the office.
- The Annual **Charlie Zahm Concert** is on the calendar on December 17th beginning at 7:00 P.M. in the Church Sanctuary. Last year’s concert was zoomed out of necessity but received over 500 “hits” on our link. It is a truly spirit lifting event!

The Christmas Eve Services will be:

- **4:00 PM** for an outdoor service that includes decorating the Christmas Tree, attending a presentation of *“The Christmas Story”* at our Live Creche, singing lots of Christmas Carols and enjoying hot chocolate, hot apple cider, and cookies. **PRAY FOR GOOD WEATHER.**

- **10:00 PM** a Candlelight service will be offered in the Sanctuary. The Adult Choir, the Bell Choir and a Brass Quintet will treat us to a truly spectacular choral event presented in a warm, enfolding setting. This service will be streamed.

As we come to the end of the year, let us renew our commitment to serve our God and seek God's guidance as to what we can do to make this a friendlier, kinder, and more hospitable world – the world that was intended at Creation. I hope to worship with you this Sunday.

In God's Love,

Pastor Maxine