

Deadline to submit articles for "The Epistle" is the 15th of each month.

Healing Eucharist Continues — Offered every week, Wednesday, at noon in Chapel of Our Lady and All Saints.

Finish out 2018 Contributions – All 2018 contributions will be due in the office by noon, Dec. 31 to receive credit in 2018.

The Parish Office will be closed Monday, Dec. 24, and reopen Thursday, Dec. 27, for the Christmas Holiday.

The Parish Office will also close at noon Monday, Dec. 31, and reopen Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2019, in observance of New Year's Day.

Reports for Annual Meeting will be due in the Parish Office by Monday, Jan. 14.

Our Wednesday Night Suppers will continue Dec. 5 & 12 and resume Jan. 9, 2019.



Christmas Eve

Monday, Dec. 24, 2018

4:30 p.m. • Family Friendly Service

Christmas Pageant

with Holy Eucharist

10:30 p.m. • Midnight Mass

Festive Choral Eucharist

with Brass Ensemble

Christmas Day

Tuesday, Dec. 25, 2018

No Service

Advent Fair is Here — December 2

Can you believe that Advent is just days away? Each year, on the first Sunday of Advent, we gather together and kick off Advent with crafts, snacks and fun. Go ahead and mark your calendar for the Advent Fair December 2, at 9:30 a.m., in the parish hall. The season of Advent reminds us to spiritually prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ child; let's embrace it together. Come and make an Advent wreath, countdown calendars, as well as get some great family resources for observing Advent in the home. This is an event for all ages, see you there!

Christmas Flowers and Special Music

It is a tradition at St. Paul's to place poinsettias on the altar in memory or honor of loved ones at Christmas. Flower forms are available in the bulletins and due in the parish office by Wednesday, Dec. 19, for your dedications to be printed in the Christmas Eve bulletins. Any excess funds received will assist in beautifying the altar and our worship throughout the year.

Care Lodge Christmas Envelopes Ready to Pick Up

Each year we have the opportunity to share in the joy of Christmas by providing wishes and needs for our Care Lodge residents. The envelopes are now available in the Parish Hall for pick up. Items should be brought unwrapped or in gift bags to the Parish Office by Monday, Dec. 10. Also, gift wrapping paper, scotch tape, bows, etc. are greatly appreciated. Parents like to wrap the children's gifts and children are assisted by Care Lodge staff in wrapping the parent's gifts.

"There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken."

-Luke, Chapter 21, verse 25

A Different Kind of Preparation

When I was a child in elementary art class, we studied Vincent van Gogh's painting, "The Starry Night." We were asked to recreate it in our own way on a piece of rich black paper and colorful pastels. This is one of the few works of art from my youth that has survived into adulthood. I have my version hanging on the wall in the rectory.



Van Gogh is one of my favorite artists, not just because of the distinctive bold colors and unique style, but because of how his art makes me feel. "The Starry Night" is scary. The sky is full of swirling clouds, shooting stars and clouds. It's violent and it's beautiful at the same time. There are rich yellows and whites dancing or burning over a village in a valley. It wouldn't be a true night sky without a crescent moon in the dark sky. It appears to me that everyone is sleeping through a spectacular light show while only the artist is awake to capture the moment.

It depicts a tree; a tree that doesn't merely grow but flames upwards towards the sky. Plus something I certainly would not have learned in art class that day years ago — art historians now believe this tree is a cypress. In van Gogh's day, cypress trees were associated with graveyards and death.

Graveyards and death. Darkness and light. Fear and wonder. It sounds like Advent. I wonder if van Gogh had Advent in mind when he created this painting. I wonder if he thought of the time of the year we await Christ's coming.

In Advent, we prepare for God coming into the world. We prepare for that baby; trimming our trees and shopping for the people we love. We prepare with hope and the joy of Christmas. And even if we tried, we can't escape the Christmas music playing on every corner or in every office cubicle.

But this is a time for stillness and quietness. It is a time to look to the sky; to be awake for those lights swirling across the sky. Because before that first candle on that wreath is

lit, Advent begins in darkness. This is a season of naming the darkness that is real in our lives and in the world. Like the tree in the painting, in darkness there is death, mourning and fear.

This is the reason we so desperately long for our God to come to us. This is where our hope breathes in the darkness. This is how we "may greet with joy" instead of with fear for Christ's coming. "O Come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel." Christ is coming to us despite all that seems to be falling apart in our lives and in our world.

As we light each candle and prepare for the light of the world, we are also reminded to look to the night sky. We are invited to be awake and alert at the time when most of us sleep, catching that hint of blue on the horizon — recognizing all the many ways God is with us — especially in our darkness. We put our hope in the Spirit of the Living God, who comes to us in Christ Jesus.

Happy Advent!

Austin

Our Newest Members in Christ



Hello, I am *Elizabeth “Libby” Francis Davis*, 2 ½-years- old and a lifelong member of St. Paul’s. My big brother Franklin (5) was also baptized at St. Pauls. I am the daughter of Mark and Nancy Davis and granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Francis of Charleston, WV, and Mr. and Mrs. Kent Davis of McComb, and the late Robin Davis of Meridian. I love baby dolls and shoes, and sleep with lots of each in my bed. I have lots of fun singing songs at school, and LOVE “Let it Go” and all things Frozen.



Hi there! My name is *Dawson Mitchell Eason*. I’m two-years-old and am the youngest of the Hanschke family. My favorite things to do are play with my construction tools and also Play Doh. I love it when people read books to me, too! When a book is done, I close it and say, “Amen!” I love singing songs with Mom or Dad playing the piano or guitar and singing with me. Some of my favorite songs are Jesus Loves Me and Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. I’m so happy to officially be a part of Jesus’ family now that I’m baptized! I love coming to St Paul’s and playing with my friends in the nursery (I talk about it all the way to church!) and receiving the Eucharist — it’s so neat to do so with my St Paul’s family! I can’t wait to learn more and grow in every way.

Hello, I’m *Ella Gray Deweese*, daughter of Menton and Matthew Deweese (both of Meridian), and I love babbling, “reading” (chewing on) books and exploring anywhere or anything I can crawl over, pull up on, climb into or put into my mouth. I’m a busy girl! I was born April 1 in Houston, TX, but my parents and I moved to Nashville, TN, in September. They haven’t found a church home yet in Nashville, but wanted me baptized at St. Paul’s, where they were married in 2012. I wore a French hand-sewn christening gown and bonnet made by my great-grandmother, Marcia Shirley, for my baptism.



Hi, I’m *Wesley Scott McGehee*. I was born May 15 of this year, so don’t be deceived by my size, I really am only seven months old. I’m so excited to be a member of St. Paul’s and of Christ’s Body. I’m so grateful I get to grow in faith, in my most formable years, with my St. Paul’s family. I love to listen to music — especially Mom’s singing — laughing at my brother Alban’s silly faces and songs, and taking neighborhood walks with my Dad and doggy, Fowler. I go to school with the sweetest teachers and love to spend Sunday mornings with Ms. Neesie, Rita and Brenda, and getting a blessing from my Dad. Thank you, everyone, for supporting (with God’s help) me and my family on our journey.



A Word of Thanks from the Rector

What a wonderful feast we had on Ingathering Sunday. Thank you Middlers for hosting this brunch on such a celebratory moment in time. We had tasty food and good conversation and it happened because of you. We thank you for making the day special for the entire St. Paul’s family. It happened because of you. You are loved.

Vestry Nominations

Nominations are open to elect three new members of the Vestry to serve three-year terms. Forms for nominations are available at the entrances to Nave and on bulletin board in the hallways and will be accepted until January 14. A potential vestry member must be a confirmed communicant; at least 21 years of age; must be canonically resident and actually residing the parish (letter of membership on file); must be entitled to suffrage at annual meeting at which elected; cannot have served on the Vestry in previous three years (though such person is immediately eligible to stand for nomination as Warden); and shall not serve more than six consecutive years in that or a combination of vestry member/warden offices unless said individual has served a portion of a former term (i.e. filled an unexpired term). Prior to the Annual Parish Meeting, potential Vestry embers will meet with the Rector; consent to the parish’s Vestry Covenant; and commit to attend the annual vestry retreat.

Get Those pledge Cards In

We have a few pledges still remaining to account for. Pledge cards are available in the front and rear entrances to Nave along with envelopes. You may drop your Pledge Envelope in the offering plate, return to Parish Office or call Joane with your verbal pledge.

A huge thank you to Wayne Wuestefeld, Chairman, and the Stewardship Committee for all their hard work. As of Nov. 30 we have 100 confirmed pledges in the amount of \$474,624.

Plan on Attending Annual Council

The 192nd Annual Council will be held at Lake Terrace Convention Center in Hattiesburg January 25-27, 2019. Online reservation is open by downloading forms from *www.dioms.org*. Registration fees increase slightly after Dec 1. St. Paul’s has reserved a block of rooms for our delegates, alternates and other parishioners who will be attending. If you would like to have a room reserved, please contact Brandon Dunn at 601.479.4899 or *bdunn@wgyates.com*.

We Remember in our Prayers

For our Parish family: Annie Melton, Bobbie Rea, Dave Russell, Dixie Pigford, DJ Wells, Edgar Morrison, Hardy Graham Sr., Jean Merrell-White, Jo Van Devender, Joe White, Lee Graham, Mary Scott, Norma Veach, Peggy Carrico, Robbie Morrison, Terry Rush, William Godwin, Jerry Greene and John Carrier III.

In our senior living communities: Deanie Carmichael, Elise Leach, Janet Sinyard, Joyce Welsh, Linda James, Lora Jones and Nita Neville.

Extended family and friends: Agnes Lewis, Alice Miller, Ally Gressett, Alixus Hearn, Amanda Lockey, Anna Meyers, AnnLee, Barbara Johnston, Barbaree Heaster, Baston Geiger, Bill Selman, Barbara Hull, Billy Hull, Bridget Mann, Cathy Parker, Cheryl Drennan, Claudia McKibben, Cory Gaylord, Diane Dunn, Dot Harrington, Edesser “Dess” Reid Ward, Rob & Aislinn Ward, Evelyn, Frank Baker, Frank Barrett, Freddie Bea Watson, Helen Valentine, Hulon Dearman, Jada Dooley, John, Ken Fisher, Kylie Temple, Leigh Ann Key, Leslie Smith, Lou Dubose, Marilyn Mohr, Mary Hallwell, Mary Irby, Michael Dial, Michelle Nelson, Nell Williams, Patricia Bonner, Philip Walk, Pud Merrell, Norman, Robert Kirkland, Ronald Keith Franks, Sally Gercens, Hannah Thompson, Seth Thompson, Stephanie Turner, Tom Cook, Tom Schram, Victoria Dunn, Wilfe Manning and Rick.

For those who have died, especially Edith Evelyn Arnold Harper, mother of Judie Miller.
For those serving in the Armed Forces, for all who serve overseas and their families, especially Shum Benson, Connor Covert, Graham Ford, Andrew Behm, Nick Mullen, Brandon States and The 155th Combat Engineers.
We pray for our Bishop Brian and we pray for our Rector Austin and his family.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Dec. 1	Bob Covert, Lee Graham, Henry Hiatt	Dec. 17	Chandler Hogan,
Dec. 2	John Breaux		Bryan & Rosilyn Holladay, Karli McGinnis
Dec. 3	Bob Deen, Michael Hasselle	Dec. 21	David Batchelor III, Tiffany Benson
Dec. 4	Bonnie Allen, Sandra Hill		Carlyle Breaux,
Dec. 6	Annie Martin		Jerry & Marilyn Greene, Ralph & Martha Young
Dec. 7	Paige Watson	Dec. 24	Harriet Simmons
Dec. 8	Sharon Davis, Dawn McCormick,	Dec. 27	David Batchelor Jr., Dottie Graham,
	John Michael McDonald		Laura Holladay
Dec. 11	Kelly & Paige Watson	Dec. 29	Hemi Gaddie
Dec. 12	Reid Perry, Jane Weems	Dec. 30	Melissa Calcote
Dec. 13	Bob & Polly Covert	Dec. 31	Kaden Begnaud

Services	DEC. 2	DEC. 9	DEC. 16	DEC. 23
VESTRY COUNTERS	Brandon Dunn & Robby Dreyfus; Lock/Rob Calcote			
8 A.M.				
CHALICE	Bob Covert	Anne Chalk	Lindy Deen	Bob Coffin
READER	John Carrier	Lindy Deen	John Carrier	Margaret Van Dyke
USHER	Bob Pigford	Bob Coffin	Linda Carrier	John Carrier
10:30 A.M.				
READER 1	Jerome Kittrell	Lloyd Gray	John Compton	Gary Jones
READER 2	Melissa Calcote	Sonya Carrier	Katie Simmons	Claire Hasselle
PRAYERS	Joan Moore	Bobbie Rea	Stacey Harwell	Candy Ward
USHERS	Susan Nowak	Jim McGinnis	Will Simmons	Albree Florey
	Larry Nowak	Cindy McGinnis	Adrian page	Scotty Florey
	Scott Hudson	Marsha Miller	Lisa Howell	Lauretta Hamilton
	Rose Hudson	Jim Miller	Chris Burchfield	Michael Kerekes
ACOLYTES	AryIn Grace Sanders	Christopher Collis	Anna Katherine Carrier	AJ Page
	Shep Sanders	Hardin Hiatt	Elizabeth Scott Bond	Sellers Breaux
	Olivia Lewis	Henry Hiatt	Wyatt Bond	Carlyle Breaux
	Kaden Begnaud	Isabella Martin	Gibson Hasselle	Katie Hasselle
ALTAR GUILD	Bev Pringle	Bev Pringle	Gloria Chancellor	Gloria Chancellor
	Connie Arline	Connie Arline	Kay Reich	Kay Reich
	Edie Simmons	Edie Simmons	Rainey Breaux	Rainey Breaux
CHALICE	Mary Weems	Sonya Carrier	Rob Calcote	Bev Pringle

EYC Attendance Down; But Remains Vital for our Youth

While we have had a great semester this EYC season, we are missing a good many of our youth each week. In fact, EYC has been experiencing a very low turnout lately, with just three-to-four youth each week. Attending EYC’ers have been growing together by creating, worshipping, serving, praying and playing each week. It is so vital to our youth to have a safe place each week to come and share their feelings, needs, accomplishments and challenges.

It can be difficult to make Wednesday and Sunday nights a priority in the crazy week, but it is so worth it in the long run. While there are many ways to work on spirituality and faith at home, it is just as important to do that within the parish family as well. At each gathering we find new ways to live into Christ’s teachings about love and service, while deepening our relationship with God. It’s important to come, and to come regularly, in order to do this.

A lot of time and prayer goes into planning EYC gatherings



We rejoice in the birth of Parker Austin Russell, born November 1 in Jackson. Proud parents are David & Kristen Russell; grandparents are Dave & Lynn Russell.

EYC in December

12/2: EYC @ St. Paul’s from 5 – 7 p.m. Come have some Advent fun with us!

12/5: EYC Film School after parish supper from 6:20 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.

12/7-12/8: EYC Spiritual Retreat at Lake Wanita. RSVP is a must. Please contact Claire to register, the cost is \$20 per family. We will leave from St. Paul’s at 6 p.m. and return on Saturday at 6 p.m.

12/9: Jr. and Sr. EYC shopping for Care Lodge from 4 – 7 p.m. Meet at the Mediator to ride the bus together.

12/12: EYC Gospel study after parish supper from 6:30 – 7:15 p.m.

12/16: Jr. and Sr. EYC Christmas Caroling from 5 – 8 p.m. Meet at the Mediator to ride the bus together. Don’t forget to wear your most exciting holiday gear for the occasion! (i.e. tacky Christmas sweaters, antlers, silly hats, etc.). This is also the night of our EYC Christmas party. Everyone should bring a snack to share and a wrapped “naughty or nice” gift worth \$10 or less.

12/19: Christmas Pageant rehearsal! We will begin at 5:30 p.m. with rehearsal in the Nave, followed by dinner and games. This is not only open to those participating in the pageant, but to all of our youth. This is a great opportunity for fellowship, please come take part in this!

12/23: Christmas Pageant rehearsal redo! Come again for rehearsal, dinner, and fellowship! This is open to all of our youth. What a fun way to spend the evening before Christmas Eve!

EYC will be on hiatus until January 13, 2019. Have a WONDERFUL holiday season! We can’t wait to start a new semester!

each week and your youth will absolutely benefit with regular attendance. Please take a look at your calendars and find a way to work in either (or both) Wednesday and Sunday evening EYC gatherings. You will be so glad you did!

I will leave you with one of my favorite quotes:

“Let everything take second place to our care of our children, our bringing them up to the discipline and instruction of the Lord. If from the beginning we teach them to love true wisdom, they will have great wealth and glory than riches can provide. If a child learns a trade, or is highly educated for a lucrative profession, all this is nothing compared to the art of detachment from riches; if you want to make your child rich, teach him this. He is truly rich who does not desire great possessions, or surround himself with wealth, but who requires nothing...”

—St. John Chrysostom

Children’s Sunday School Check-In

St. Paul’s youngest parishioners have been turning out in great numbers this semester, thanks to our wonderful teachers and diligent parents! Last month we heard from our teachers, this month we will hear from a few of our students. Let’s all work together to keep our momentum going and the excitement building. It is such a blessing to have a strong church family to lean on in good times, as well as challenging ones. A few words from our students:

Rowan Hanshke: “I like Sunday School because I get to learn about Jesus and the Bible.”

Peyton Pendergrass: “I like Sunday School because we get to read stories in the Bible and do crafts.”

Katie Hasselle: “I love to talk to my friends at church.”

How can we Observe Advent at Home?

Advent Calendar

He will come like last leaf’s fall.

One night when the November wind has played the trees to the bone, and earth wakes choking on the mould, the soft shroud’s folding.

He will come like frost.

One morning when the shrinking earth opens on mist, to find itself arrested in the net of alien, sword-set beauty.

He will come like dark.

One evening when the bursting red December sun draws up the sheet and penny-masks its eye to yield the star-snowed fields of sky.

He will come, will come, will come like crying in the night, like blood, like breaking, as the earth writhes to toss him free.

He will come like child.

—Rowan Williams,
104th Archbishop of Canterbury

On December 2 the season of Advent will be upon us. Social media posts will overflow with beautiful, meaningful ways to celebrate the lead-in to the Christmas season (which, by the way, doesn’t actually start until December 2).

Sometimes, when I see photos or activities that other parents do with their kids, I feel less than adequate. Keeping Advent traditions like a daily Advent countdown chain, a Jesse Tree or an Advent devotion every night is mostly unrealistic. If I tried to do these things daily, it would probably bring a lot of stress to my family, rather than the positive spiritual formation I’m aiming for.

Prepare the Way of the Lord

Advent literally means “the coming.” The Advent season is about preparation, not performance or perfection. We are preparing our hearts to welcome Christ in his coming — first through setting the ground to understand the story of the incarnation as he came to Bethlehem, then in grateful awareness of how he has come to us in our own salvation story, and in holy anticipation as we look to Christ’s second coming.

So with crazy unapparelled schedules, various ages around the dinner table and fresh emotions lingering from daily encounters, how can we walk through Advent, preparing the way of the Lord? Below are a few simple suggestions!

Advent Candles & Wreath

Create a space for a simple Advent wreath with candles this year. Each evening, or just once a week, turn off all the lights nearby and light the correct number of candles for the week. This can be coupled with a simple prayer or a simple song. This is a very simple way to mark Advent that engages even the youngest child. There will be take home devotionals and resources for this available at the Advent Fair.

A Simple Prayer

Pray the collect for each week of Advent. A collect is simply a prayer that can gather the thoughts of the congregation, or family.

You can find Advent collects in the Book of Common Prayer on pages 211 and 212. You can repeat the prayer each night for the week or pray it Sunday night at dinner. Maybe breakfast is the only time you are all together around the table—pray it then!

A Simple Song

My kids love to sing, “O Come, O Come Emmanuel.” When we light our Advent candles, we sing this each time (that may be only once or twice a week and that’s okay!) The first week of Advent, we sing one verse. The second week, we sing verses one and two. By the end of Advent last year, my kids know all four verses by heart.

Purple Paper Napkins or Tablecloths

The liturgical color of Advent is purple (or blue), which signifies royalty (our King Jesus!) and penitence as we prepare our hearts for his coming. Buy purple or blue paper napkins to use during Advent, or if you have one, use a purple or blue tablecloth or runner.

Prayer Cards

Pray together as a family during Advent. Before Advent begins, gather 24 index cards and write the names of 24 people, countries, unreached people groups, loved ones, friends or family members you know are in need. Each day when you gather with your family, choose one card and pray for the person or need on the card.

Nativity

If you have a nativity set, or creche, set it up in a common area. Set the Holy Family across the room. Each Sunday during Advent, or each time you remember, move the Holy Family closer to the manger as we travel closer to Jesus’ birth. Hide baby Jesus until Christmas Eve and have the kids find him.

These are just a few ideas to get your family started. In the Hasselle household we do a little of each as we are able, each day holds new challenges. We do the best we can and we fall short many days. My goal is for my children to understand — and feel — something special and life-changing is headed our way.