

—The Episcopal Parish of —  
**St. Mark  
& St. Paul**  
—On the Mountain—

**December 2025**



### **From the Rector: Advent-ure**

I enjoy etymology! That's probably not the nerdiest thing about me, but it's one of them. We often talk about how Advent means "coming" (or more precisely "coming to"). It is a season when we prepare (in this order) for the Second Coming of Christ at the end of the age, the coming of Jesus' adult ministry, and his coming into the world as a newborn baby.

Until this year I had not considered the common root Advent shares with "adventure." An adventure is an unusual, exciting, perhaps risky undertaking, where some surprise is not unexpected. That certainly describes Christ returning in majesty to judge the world, hair-shirted, locust-eating, "brood of vipers"-accusing John the Baptist, and the King of Kings being born under

humble and disrupted circumstances.

I pray the remainder of the season of Advent will be adventurous for you and for us together as a congregation. Where might God be coming in an unexpected place? How might we guard ourselves from commercially-generated excitement and instead open ourselves to the depths-of-soul excitement of God's love for the world? Where might we be called to take a risk in our life of faith, or when might a surprise be God's message rather than a distraction?

"Stir up your power O Lord, and with great might come among us, . . ." begins the collect for the 3rd Sunday of Advent. Sounds like it's time for some adventure!

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## **Vestry Update: Regular meeting of November 18**

- Heard from the Evangelism Committee about plans for foyer group gatherings in late January and early February.
- Designated as endowment an unrestricted bequest received by the parish.
- Adopted revisions to parish financial policies and procedures as proposed by the Finance Committee.
- Elected Dorothy Gates, Susan Holmes, and Beth Wiley to be parish delegates to Diocesan Convention in 2026, Jeannie Babb, Mary Priestley, and Paul Richaud to be alternates.

## **Upcoming Special Services**

### *December 14*

Sunday services at 8:30 & 11am; Christian Formation classes at 9:45  
4:30pm Christmas pageant, McCrory Auditorium, SAS

### *December 21*

Sunday services at 8:30 & 11am; no Christian Formation classes

### *December 22-26 and Jan 1*

The parish office will be closed December 22-26, and January 1.

### *December 24*

**4:30pm Christmas Eve service at All Saints' Chapel**

**9:30pm Christmas Eve service at St. Mark & St. Paul**

### *December 25*

**10am Christmas Day service at St. Mark & St. Paul**

### *December 28*

Sunday services at 8:30 & 11am; no Christian Formation classes

### *January 4*

Sunday services at 8:30 & 11am; Christian Formation classes at 9:45

### *January 6*

Epiphany service at Christ Church, Tracy City, 5:00pm, followed by a potluck supper.

# Epiphany

## Feast of the Epiphany

We are invited to participate in the joint celebration of the Epiphany to take place Tuesday, January 6, at 5:00pm at Christ Church, 530 10th St., Tracy City. Please bring a dish to share at the potluck after the service.



### Let it snow!?

The Parish of St. Mark & St. Paul follows Franklin County Schools for closures due to winter weather. Sewanee Children's Center decides and publicizes when it will close.

Do you like being out in the snow on the rare occasions we have it? If you are sound of back and heart, would you like to join other volunteers on the St. Nicholas Guild for snow removal? Please contact Junior Warden Dorothy Gates if you're willing to assist in our being able to hold services safely.

**Constant Contact Newsletter Email:** When you get to the bottom of your email you may see "[Message clipped] [View entire message](#)". To see the full newsletter click on "View entire message."

### Pictures of a busy church . . .





### *Advent Wreath making*



### *Lessons & Carols 2025*



***The Children's Choir sang at the community tree lighting in Angel Park***



*St. Nicholas visit.*

You are invited to a

# A WINTER FOYER GATHERING

Click the house to signup!



What:

A small group of parishioners meeting together for fellowship, guided scripture reflection, and prayer (scripture, discussion questions, and prayers provided by the church).

Where: Groups are encouraged to meet in a host home. You may indicate whether you are willing to host when signing up.

When: Every week for three weeks, January 25 – Feb 13 (depending on the day of the week your group meets) for 1.5 hours each.

Why: To deepen our relationships with God and one another, and connect with new people.

How: Sign up at the link (click on the house above). Rank your preferences for meeting day and time. We hope to have enough participants to offer groups at the following times:

- Saturdays, January 25, February 1 and February 8 at 5 pm
- Sundays, January 26, February 2 & February 9 at 2 pm or 4:30 pm
- Tuesday mornings, January 28, February 4, & February 11 at 10 am
- Thursday evenings, January 30, February 6, and February 13 at 6:30 pm

We will be in touch in mid-January with the details of your group meeting.

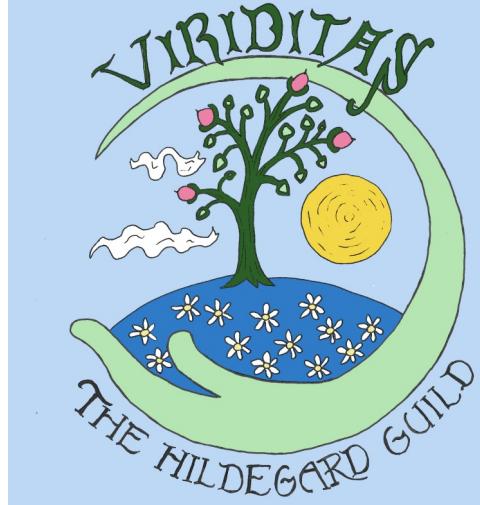
Questions? Reach out to Kelly at [curate@stmarkstpaul.org](mailto:curate@stmarkstpaul.org) or call Dan in the office, 931-598-5926

## Hildegard Guild

The newly formed Hildegard Guild inspired by the works of the medieval mystic Hildegard of Bingen now boasts 7 members! Julia and Robin Bates, Diane Jones, and Alec Moseley have joined the original organizers John Gatta, Mary Priestley, and Wendy Prothro Howard in efforts to carry out the Guild's mission, which is concerned with Creation Care at SMSP, by increasing recycling efforts and decreasing the church's carbon footprint. Please support us in these initiatives by closely following the guidelines as depicted on the bins for

aluminum, paper, and plastic  
recycling found in Kennerly Hall.  
*Viriditas!*

*In the Spirit of Hildegard of Bingen*



**Creation Care at St. Mark & St. Paul**

## Christian Formation

**By Jeannie Babb, Director of Christian Formation**  
[formation@stmarkstpaul.org](mailto:formation@stmarkstpaul.org) 423-255-6479 cell



### Christmas Pageant

*Sunday, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>, 4:30 pm in McCrory Hall at St. Andrews-Sewanee School*

It's pageant time! There will be a dress rehearsal on Saturday, December 13, beginning at 3:30pm for those with lines and 4:00 for the whole cast. A short song practice is scheduled for 9:30-10:00 each Sunday morning through December 14.

**Book Studies - Frederick Buechner:**  
Writing for the Kingdom

Tuesday December 16, will be the last session of Rev. Tom Gildemeister lead study on Frederick Buechner: Writing for the Kingdom.

This will take place in Brooks Hall, 5:30-6:30pm. Light refreshments are served. Bringing a dish or snack to share is invited but not required. The Advent Study will take the place of our usual Book Study for the month of December.



Tom writes: *Frederick Buechner is a complicated person. When he was 12, his alcoholic father committed suicide in the family garage. Little Freddie found his father's body. Not in a conspicuous way (at least to me reader of most everything he wrote), his life and therefore his books are attempts to come to terms with the tragedy of his father's life.*

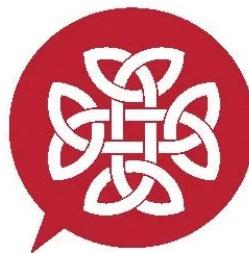
*His mother's parents were wealthy , and he attended Lawrenceville, an elite prep school in New Jersey , and Princeton University. The year after he graduated from Princeton, first novel, A Long Day's Dying was a critical and commercial success. The New York Times him hailed as one of two great young writers in America. The other was Truman Capote.*

*He was living in New York City when he attended a large Presbyterian church. He was profoundly impacted by the minister's preaching , and they became friends. The preacher finally confronted him — challenging him to "write for the kingdom." He attended Union Theological Seminary, studying with such luminaries as Paul Tillich and Reinhold Niebuhr. He insisted that all theology is autobiography--that God is revealed in each of our lives if we would be honest about all the good and the bad of it.*

*He became a master of narrative theology, calling himself a preacher who writes. And did he ever write... his bibliography (19 books in all) includes novels, memoirs, published sermons, and riffs on many theological constructs and biblical characters, many of which poke fun at our heady attempts to explain the inexplicable--e.g., "Doubt is the ants in the pants of faith."*

Tom lives in Sewanee and Nashville. He was an Echols Scholar at the University of Virginia, a Woodruff Fellow at the Candler School of Theology (Emory University), studied at San Francisco Theological Seminary, and is writing his thesis for the MFA program at the Sewanee School of Letters. He has attended a writer's workshop led by the Rev. Frederick Buechner. You will find him mostly in the woods around our little mountain village.

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**RITE13™**



**JOURNEY TO ADULTHOOD™**

### **Rite-13 & Journey to Adulthood**

Our youth program has doubled this fall, as students invite their friends to join them in Brooks Hall on Sunday afternoons.

The Rite-13 and J2A groups have continued their meetings this fall, getting introduced to some new tabletop games with the Rev. Roger Speer. In the new year, we'll be turning to learning about our gifts and talents, and how we work towards the building up of God's kingdom. We'll also be finalizing mission trip details for the summer!

Rite-13 is for students in grades 6-7). This fall, we launched Journey to Adulthood (J2A) for students in grades 8-10. Both groups meet Saturday afternoons. For more information, contact Hilary at ([hbwchurch@gmail.com](mailto:hbwchurch@gmail.com)).

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### **Nursery Notes – Help wanted**

Nursery services are offered during church services, and during Sunday School and choir practice as needed. We meet mostly on the playground. We also use a children's classroom downstairs in inclement weather.

Children are usually brought into the church during announcements to participate in Eucharist with their parents. Please communicate with staff about this at drop-off. For more information, talk with our nursery coordinator Cara Kitzrow.

We have openings for additional Nursery staff for the 2025-2026 school year. Please share the word, and contact Jeannie Babb or Cara Kitzrow to apply or inquire.



Please register your child for Nursery online:

<https://onrealm.org/StMarkStPaul/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=ZDk4ODBiZWQtNWQxOC00NjM0LWJhMmUtYjA1MzAwZmY1MTdi>

Please be sure to sign in on the Nursery clipboard, and indicate whether you'd like your child brought into the church during announcements to participate in Eucharist.

## Sunday School for All Ages

Additional adult volunteers are needed for our Sunday School classes. All volunteers participate in online training and a background check. Please see Jeannie Babb to find out more.

**Godly Play 1** is for children aged 3 to 5. The basic Godly Play stories are introduced and considered. Learning is enhanced with art, music, and play. At times, this class will be combined with Godly Play 2.

**Godly Play 2** offers children in grades 1-3 an opportunity to learn enrichment lessons and go deeper into the story. This classroom has the same structure as Godly Play 1 – story, wondering, work, feast, and sometimes a romp on the playground.

**4th/5th Class** takes children in grades 4 and 5 beyond Godly Play. This class meets in Brooks Hall to read and talk about books, applying Scripture to fictional situations and their own lives. The schedule also includes time for food, fellowship, and fun with art, Legos, etc. The first book for this year is *Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli. Class leaders are Julia Bates and Matthew Mitchell.

**Youth Sunday School** offers middle schoolers and high schoolers a time to encounter God and get to know one another. Paul and Andrea Richaud led the class in 2024-2025 with a fresh, relational style based on teachable moments.



You can also register your child for Godly Play online using this link or QR Code. Your registration helps us protect and care for your child.  
<https://onrealm.org/StMarkStPaul/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=NWZjNjY2MTEtODJhZi00MTVkLTImM2ltYjA1MzAwZjk4Zjh>

## Sunday Forum

The Sunday Forum continues with the 2025-2026 theme from Micah 6:8 which tells us to do justly, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God. The Christian Formation Committee has scheduled a slate of speakers to help us apply this call to our own context. Most sessions are livestreamed and recorded. We have had excellent sessions thus far! Don't miss out. See the flyer for a list of upcoming sessions.

## Tuesday Lectionary Class

The lectionary class meets Tuesdays from 3:30-4:30 in Brooks Hall to talk about the Gospel lesson for the upcoming Sunday. Led by the Rev. Scott Lee, this class is open to everyone in the community. It's a place to consider the lesson more deeply and reflect on it together. Lectionary Class will meet as normal through

the holiday season.

## Centering Prayer

*Mondays at 7pm with Jennifer Michael*

*Tuesday afternoons at 2:30pm with Scott Lee*

Centering Prayer is a method of silent prayer through which we consent to God's presence and action within us. Those who practice it do so not in place of corporate worship and service, but rather as a necessary complement to those modes of engaging with God and with neighbor. With chairs encircling a candle at the front of the nave, we have a brief check-in about our prayer practice and anything else going on in our lives, and then we have a meditation session (what we call a "sit") together. For more information, contact Jennifer Michael [jmichael@sewanee.edu](mailto:jmichael@sewanee.edu).

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## Education for Ministry

by EfM Mentor Wendy Prothro  
Howard



Our EfM cohort includes students in Year 1 studying Hebrew Scripture, Year 2 studying Christian Scripture, Year 3 Christian History, Year 4 Christian Ethics and Spirituality, one in taking the new Wide Angle program which delves into a mix of texts. EfM opens with worship, then a discussion of texts. Each session includes a reflection on a story, event, or artwork. The goal of EfM is to deepen faith and to discover expressions of that faith in service to others. Registration takes place each fall.

**The last class for 2025 will be Monday 12/15. We will resume classes on Monday January 5, 2026.**

For more information, contact Wendy Howard [finance@stmarkstpaul.org](mailto:finance@stmarkstpaul.org).

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## CAC Information

The Community Action Committee (CAC) is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM. Neighbors are able to visit the office during this time to pick

out groceries in the pantry and inquire about assistance with utility bills. The work of CAC is not possible without the support of the Parish of St. Mark & St. Paul.

## Donations Always Appreciated

The work of the Community Action Committee is made possible through the generous support we receive from our community. Donations of food items and financial contributions continue to make a tremendous impact. We are overwhelmed with gratitude for all the donations that have flooded our pantry the last few months. All item donations, as well as financial contributions (<https://www.cacsewanee.org/donate>), are always welcomed and directly support the mission of CAC. For those who prefer to give in other ways, our Amazon Wish List (<https://a.co/f6TXKX4>) makes it easy to send needed items straight to us. Your kindness ensures that we can continue meeting the needs of our community. Thank you for standing with us.

**COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE**  
**Donations List**

**Food Needs**

CANNED CHICKEN	PASTA
CANNED TUNA	MACARONI AND CHEESE
INDIVIDUAL PACKAGED SNACKS	RICE
SOFT GRANOLA BARS	DRY BEANS
PROTEIN DRINKS (ENSURE, ETC.)	CANNED VEGETABLES
CANNED SOUPS	PEANUT BUTTER
INSTANT OATMEAL PACKETS	JELLY
CEREAL	VEGETABLE OIL
SHELF STABLE MILK	CORN MUFFIN MIX
FRUIT CUPS	PASTA SAUCE

**Supply Needs**

SHAMPOO	TOILET PAPER	FEMININE PADS
SOAP	PAPER TOWELS	TAMPONS
TOOTHBRUSHES	LAUNDRY DETERGENT	BABY DIAPERS
TOOTHPASTE	DISH SOAP	BABY WIPES
	DISINFECTANT WIPES	

DONATIONS CAN BE DROPPED OFF ON THE PORCH OUTSIDE THE CAC OFFICE OR INSIDE THE CHURCH DOORS AT ST. MARK & ST. PAUL, BOTH AT 216 UNIVERSITY AVE, SEWANEE.

## Pantry Sunday

As a reminder, CAC Pantry Sunday is the first Sunday of every month. For this

upcoming month, we will collect and bless over our donations on Sunday, January 4th. Be on the lookout for the shopping list leading up to Pantry Sunday. Donations can be dropped off at the CAC office, or at the bin inside the church doors.

## A CAC Christmas

The Season of Angels Tree is now up in Kennerly Hall near the front entrance. The tree is nearly complete for this season, so be sure to stop by and pick up any remaining tags to help make Christmas dreams come true. All gifts are due by Tuesday, December 16th.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Sarah at [cac@stmarkstpaul.org](mailto:cac@stmarkstpaul.org). Thank you for helping brighten the season for our neighbors!



BE A CAC ANGEL

Be a CAC Angel this Christmas Season by helping us with our Season of Angels Tree.

Please take a tag from the tree and make a child's Christmas wishes come true.

The front tag includes the child's clothing sizes and Christmas wishes. The additional page attached has more instructions for donors.

Gifts are due back by **Tuesday, December 16th**. They can be left at CAC or the Season of Angels Tree.

The Season of Angels Tree is located in Kennerly Hall at the Parish of St. Mark & St. Paul (216 University Avenue, Sewanee)

COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE (931) 598 - 5927

Thank you for your continued support of CAC and our work in the community!

If you are interested in learning more about CAC, and how you can help, please contact Sarah at [cac@stmarkspaul.org](mailto:cac@stmarkspaul.org).

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## Cub Corner

Sewanee Cub Scout Pack 152 has spent the last month completing our outdoor adventure, and working on citizenship. The Lions and Tigers have been learning about rules and being a team player, while the Wolves and Bears learned from seminarian Gene Hart about how to take care of the American Flag. The Webelos are getting ready for our spring service project, and enjoyed meeting with Sarah Edmonds to learn about the work of CAC. We have also started our fitness adventure, and enjoyed playing games together! We'll end the semester with a holiday hike on the Domain.

If you're interested in joining Scouts, or know a kid in grades K-4 interested in joining, please email [sewaneepack152@gmail.com](mailto:sewaneepack152@gmail.com) for more info!

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## COFFEE HOUR – HOSTS NEEDED

***Get your service power through coffee hour!***

As one of the church's oldest methods of fellowship, coffee hour serves an enormous purpose.

***We need HOSTS to continue this fellowship flow.***

No need to bake a cake or shop until you drop for this - simply provide a small snack to serve with coffee after the 11am service in Kennerly Hall. *EVEN if you forget to bring a snack, St. Mark & St. Paul always has your back with extra snacks you can utilize if necessary.*

Coffee is simple to make in the coffee maker. The parish provides the coffee.

***PLEASE consider signing up on the board in Kennerly Hall TODAY!***



## A Note from your Altar Guild

We wish to extend a warm welcome to our new parish members and a continued “thank you” to those who have been around a while.

The Altar Guild ministry is open to everyone – including men, as you may have noticed in the weekly bulletin listing those serving each Sunday.

Some families like to get involved and that is certainly encouraged. We like to utilize everyone’s particular skills. Some like to polish brass/silver while some like to wash linens for the Eucharist. I personally like the satisfaction of seeing the altar setup for the service – everything in its place and ready for the ministers to use during the service.

Like everything else, altar guild service is not for everyone. We welcome you to try it out for a month or two to see if it is as fulfilling for you as it is for those of us currently serving. We promise we will be there to walk you through everything and we utilize checklists, post photographs or diagrams of altar setups and provide manuals to help us all remember what to do.

What type of time commitment is involved? For our regular services we schedule 2 members a Sunday. They usually meet on Sat. morning to polish and get the vessels setup for Sunday. On Sunday morning, one person comes prior to the 8:30am service (around 8:00am) and sets out the prepared items. After that service both members clean what was used and resets for the 11:00am service. After that service the second member cleans and puts everything away. Of course there are special services such as funerals or seasonal services where we all pitch in according to our availability.

Interested and/or have questions? Please let Dan Amundson know in the church office at 931-598-5926 and we will contact you in a timely manner.

Lynda Gotko and Dorothy Gates – Co-chairs of Altar Guild

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## Giving to the Parish of St. Mark & St. Paul

### **Bill Pay from Your Bank Website**

Use the Bill Pay service provided by your bank. If your bank offers online bill pay services, follow their setup directions to add the church as a payee, and add recurring automatic payments. Use the name and address below for the payee:

Parish of St. Mark & St. Paul  
P.O. Box 267  
Sewanee, TN 37375  
(931) 598-5926

### **By Mail**

Mail us a check, or place cash or check in the offering plate on Sunday. If you are giving toward a pledge, please write “Pledge” on the memo or envelope. If

mailing, send to us at the above address.

### Online Giving

Convenient and secure -- You can make a one-time donation or set up a recurring gift. Choose credit, debit or bank account payments. If you already have a login for our Realm software, you can either **Give Now** or text "Otey\$75" (or any amount) to 73256. Follow the prompts and manage your account. **More information regarding Realm below.**

### Get Connected with Realm

**Let's get connected.**

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-  Communicate with groups & teams
-  Follow church announcements
-  Look up members
-  Manage giving
-  Create and join events

[Let's be the church... together.](#)



Realm Connect



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App Store



Get it on  
Google Play

Our church management software has expanded capabilities to help parishioners get connected and stay that way. You can easily update your personal information, see the status of your giving, and set up online one-time or recurring electronic giving. As always, we are still able to receive gifts by check.

Interested or have questions?  
Call the Church Office at 931-598-5926.

**Prayer Requests:** Brady Hall, Emily Hauze, Kim Heitzenrater, Phebe Hethcock, Mike Jones, Mike Mattei, Julian Price, Leah Rhys, Isaiah Shelby, Evelyn Taylor, Freddy Tucker, those who are refugees or suffering the effects of war or violence.



### December Birthdays

Susan Holmes 12/1, Carol Titus 12/3, Brown Cooper 12/5, Frank Lankewicz 12/6, Cayleigh Mainord 12/6, Zell Hoole 12/7, Diane Getty 12/10, Laurie Ramsey 12/11, Joseph Kitzrow 12/11, Bob Roberson 12/14, Ben Richaud 12/16, Kathy Solomon 12/18, Addison Willis 12/24, Luwin Lewis 12/30, Annwn Myers 12/31

### Office Hours for 2025

The Parish of St. Mark and St Paul

9:00am-4:30pm Monday,  
Wednesday & Friday

9:00am-1:00pm Tuesday &  
Thursday

216 University Avenue  
P. O. Box 267  
Sewanee, TN 37375  
(931) 598-5926

[www.stmarkstpaul.org](http://www.stmarkstpaul.org)



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