



Blue Christmas Service
Sunday, 18 December at 3 pm
in the Church

Christmas Eve
5:30 pm - Christmas Music
6 pm - The Holy Eucharist

Christmas Day
9 am - Holy Eucharist (Chapel)

Christmas 1
Sunday, 1 January 2023
The Holy Name of
Our Lord Jesus Christ
9 am

THE FRANCISCAN STAFF

The Newsletter of the people of
Saint Francis in the Valley Episcopal Church
600 South La Cañada Drive
Green Valley AZ 85614

Vol. 59, No. 10

December, 2022

Our mission is to live as Christ's heart and hands in the world.

Words From Warren . . .

*Oh little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth, the everlasting light
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*

Christmas is the time when we are drawn to Bethlehem, an obscure out of the way town in a corner of the Roman empire. It was a time when the world was crying out for a sign of hope from God. Life was hard. There was much despair.

Not much has changed in nearly two thousand years. People still struggle to survive. As 2022 comes to an end, we continue to deal with health challenges as we emerge from the pandemic. The overwhelming burden of inflation and the dip in the economy has made it harder for people to put food on the table as they face increased housing and living costs.

The verse above says "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight." In our challenging times there is the same dichotomy of hopes and fears. Fears seem to overwhelm us at times, but deep in our souls the Spirit stirs up a hope. We hear the voice of the prophets promising release from the chains that bind us, shouting out hope in times of despair, peace in times of violence, Light in a time of darkness.

Christmas draws us back to Bethlehem, pulling us away from the shopping malls and busy streets, drawing us to the babe lying in the manger. We bring Jesus our hurts and fears seeking relief from burdens that at times seem to crush us—we bring our fears, but leave the manger with hope for the future.

The birth of Jesus reminds us that God is faithful and that God's love and grace promises to uplift us and move us towards new possibilities in our lives and for our world. The message of Christmas and its hope hasn't changed since that night in Bethlehem. The hope we seek is right before us. Let us celebrate with joyful hearts!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and your family. May 2023 bring many blessings!

Fr. Warren

Franciscan Focus

In December, 1223, in the town of Greccio, Italy, some 35 miles from Assisi, Francis prepared a Christmas celebration that has been repeated in one form or another many times since. His intent was to help ordinary people understand the meaning Christ's coming into the world. Until then, people went to Mass on Christmas, listened to the Christmas story in Latin, a language they did not usually communicate, in and viewed manger scenes that were not very true to life.

Francis, on the other hand, wanted to create something more meaningful for ordinary people. To the barn where Christ was born, according to the Gospel of Luke, Francis thought that there must have also been animals. And so Francis added livestock and chose a local couple and their child to portray Jesus and his parents. As for the magi and shepherds, they were selected from Francis' friars. The nativity scene let ordinary people imagine, like stained glassed windows representing biblical scenes did, what the first Christmas may have been like.

That Christmas eve, candles and torches were lit up, people sang praises to the Lord and a liturgical drama followed. In his sermon, Francis, filled with joy, love and tears, told the Christmas story. He described how Emmanuel (God-with-us) chose to come into this world, not with heavenly lights and thunderous trumpet sounds, but as a destitute and helpless infant.

The tradition of Christmas would spread quickly and widely among people from that first nativity scene in Greccio. Angels, camels, shepherds, three kings, etc., would be added. But more importantly, Francis wanted to show with the birth of Christ, God's tenderness and embrace of His Creation which will later be sacramentalized in the Eucharistic celebration.

Annual Reports

If you are in charge of a group or committee that contributes to the Annual Report (presented at the Annual Meeting of the Parish), please send your report—as soon as possible—via email to Gerald (the lucky guy who gets to put it all together) at gerald@stfrancisgvaz.org.



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Saint Francis in the Valley Episcopal Church
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THE VERY REV. DR. WARREN LEIBOVITCH

Rector

The Rev. Becky Williamson

Deacon

The Rev. Linda Hutson

Deacon

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Kristi Menix, Junior Warden

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Joyce Davison, Sandy Eckstein, Glenn Matto,

Orji Isiogu, Vince Remillard, Cheryl Tardy-Albin

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Megan McAllister

Financial Assistant

Gerald Near

Director of Music

J. Michael Case

Organist

Sharlyn Matthews

Director Emeritus, Handbell Ensemble

Sophia Witte

Handbell Ensemble Director



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Green Valley, is to live as Christ's heart and hands
in the world.*

Gratitude in Giving

The “2023 Gratitude in Giving Campaign” for St. Francis in the Valley was kicked off during October with an informational mailing which included an “Estimate of Giving” form. Parishioners are asked to share their estimated financial support (Treasure) of St. Francis in the Valley for the coming year, which in turn allows for budget planning for: staff, maintenance & repair of the physical campus, and the many ministries which support our parish family, the local communities, and the world at large.

Thank you to all of you who have already sent in your Estimate of Giving. The number of responses has surpassed those from each of the previous three years, which is most appreciated. If you have not yet sent your Estimate of Giving form, you can complete it online by going to the St. Francis in the Valley website, where you can click on the “2023 Gratitude in Giving Campaign” button which will take you to the campaign information and the Estimate of Giving Form (which can be filled out online) or you can print it and manually fill it out and mail it to the church, or drop it in the collection plate. A timely response is essential for preparing the coming year’s Budget. Please note: you can share your estimate anonymously, if you so choose.

From the Parish Librarian

One of the wonderful things I get to do as church librarian is discover the many treasures we have in the collection of books we can offer to you to enjoy and learn from. The one I wish to share with you during this season of Advent and Christmas is THE CHRISTMAS STORY told through wonderful paintings from The Metropolitan Museum of Art with excerpts from the King James Version of the Bible, and commentary by Richard Muhlberger, formerly the Museum’s Vice Director of Education.

In the preface Muhlberger writes “Through the centuries, the recounting of the Nativity of Jesus has never changed. This book introduces you to varied interpretations of the people in this well-known story following closely the words of Matthew and Mark. It is a small company—the handsome angels and serious shepherds; the Wise Men who are self-confident; Mary, Jesus’ mother, is silent and meditative with her husband, Joseph, standing by, sometimes trying to be helpful, but more often looking

a little confused. Baby Jesus radiates light in some paintings and in others expresses intelligent curiosity or gentle love. As familiar as you (and I) may be with the Christmas story, through paintings and the commentary that accompanies them, you will come to know it anew.”

This and many other books are available for you to check out and enjoy in your church library during the week and on the Library Table in the Parish Hall on Sunday. Enjoy!!

Joyce Davison, Librarian

Blue Christmas Service

Sunday, December 18, at 3 PM

For many people the holiday season is not filled with joy; rather it’s a time of sadness, depression, grief. Our Blue Christmas service of readings and music is offered as a way of acknowledging and honoring those feelings together with others who are also experiencing a sense of loss and aloneness. Please join us—and invite others you may know who are suffering this season—as we look to the coming of the Christ Child for hope and comfort.

Outreach Christmas Stars

Bea Dow and Nancy Symons (aka Santa’s Elves) are busy helping the Salvation Army spread Christmas cheer in the form of \$50 gift cards. You will find the Stars (each one with the name of a needy teenager) available in the Parish Hall following Sunday services. Return your Star with a \$50 Visa gift card by Sunday, December 11 or, alternatively, you may write a check for \$50 (made payable to St. Francis Church with ‘Xmas Stars’ in the memo line) and the elves will do the shopping for you. Stars and checks may also be returned to the Parish Office (Monday through Thursday, 9 AM until NOON) during the week.

Forward Day by Day

FORWARD DAY BY DAY devotional booklets for November, December (2022) and January (2023) are available in the Parish Office during the week, and on Sunday mornings you can find them in the Parish Hall as well as the Office.

Senior Warden's Thoughts

On Sunday, November 20, our Bishop Jennifer Reddall joined us for worship and performed Confirmation, Reception and Affirmation ceremonies of eight worshipers from St. Francis and five from St. Alban's in Tucson. It was a joyful celebration, and we welcomed the bishop and our guests with a light lunch at the coffee hour following the service. Welcoming new friends to our church and into our hearts is an important part of being people of God.

And on Thanksgiving, there was a wonderful Thanksgiving Dinner prepared for our church and community. Again, we welcome others with our hearts and share with them our bounty in the Lord.

Advent has begun and we await the birth of our Savior. Fr. Warren is leading an Advent Series which highlights Simplicity and Balance, Simplicity and Letting Go, Simplicity and Joy, and Simplicity and Faith. What an interesting way to approach this Advent Season. Let the days ahead be filled with the simple things we do, letting go of things that may hurt others, bringing joy to others, and restoring our faith in our Lord.

May you all have a meaningful Advent Season and a joyous Christmas with friends and family. And may Christ fill your hearts with Love.

Blessings.

In Christ,

Jullie Reppenhagen, Senior Warden

Junior Warden's Notes

It is the season of Advent! The upkeep of the buildings and grounds continues. The Church is looking toward 2023 with our Stewardship initiative and budget proposals.

1. Tom Cadwalader, Church volunteer and lead on the newly purchased and installed audiovisual and streaming system, continues to tweak the use of the system along with the new lighting system in the Chapel and Church. Thanks to Tom and other volunteers—Neal Hursh, Chris Arundell, Gloria Cadwalader, Erik Ringkjøb, George Grove, Lexi Harby, and Joe McCarthy for their dedicated service to streaming services out to the parish, region, and globe!

2. So many repairs and replacements have occurred the past couple of years. There is more to do. The proposed 2023 budget for building and grounds contains cost estimates for a number of

additional items, most because of deterioration, ineffective function, or for health and safety issues:

1. hand washing station for Parish Hall kitchen as well as a
2. new dish machine,
3. replacement of the deteriorating split rail fence surrounding the west parking lot,
4. repair and replacement of cracking and breaking up asphalt widespread on campus,
5. replacement of water-damaged and worn Parish Hall carpet (the plank center floor was replaced in 2021),
6. replacement of four deteriorating trellises on the east side of the office complex,
7. sealing of deteriorating bricks of wall of columbarium and
8. installing pitched top to wall to prevent further brick damage (from moisture seepage),
9. installation of wrought iron gates for the two entrances into the Courtyard to prevent late-day-entrance of javelina, sometimes in herds and with their babies, and a risk for injuring parishioners and visitors,
10. replacement of water-damaged and worn Parish Hall carpet,
11. enough gravel for front property to ensure effective water runoff control and achievement of landscape quality finishing appearance,
12. repair of fractured tiles (July 16 hail storm) on Church and Chapel roofs, and,
13. the total replacement of the damaged flat roof covering Parish Hall, meeting rooms, and office complex as well as beyond-repair mechanical units and cracked skylights.

3. Deana Bond, Lead Sexton, has resigned after 18 months of employment. We sadly have accepted her resignation. Contact Father Warren through the office or Kristi Menix, Junior Warden, kmenix18@gmail.com or 406-600-9344, if questions, needs, or to let us know of any contacts you may have who have custodial and maintenance expertise and have positive interpersonal skills and persona! Thank you, Deana, for all you have brought to this position and all you have done for the parish and community! Enjoy a moment with Deana at the fellowship coffee hour on Sunday, December 4.

4. The grounds team members continue work in this cooler weather. The property looks so nice! Let our long term members know you appreciate their efforts and teamwork: Reg Kahrmanis, Craig Reid, Jack Ross, Mark Stril, Chris Arundell, Arliene Stremming, Joyce and Vince Remillard, and Gary La Barre. We welcome four new members who have stepped up to add their time and talent toward pruning, cleaning up trimmings and debris, sweeping and cleaning, moving rock along with removing silt, shoring up the water collection pit with black plas-

tic and river rock, moving dirt and gravel, shoring up the rim of the water runoff collection pit (north east corner of front property), and much more! Welcome to Susan and Jon Burch, Steve Huhta, and our St. Clare Garden gardener, Harvey Eaves! We appreciate getting to know you and treasure your interest and hard work!

Have a blessed Advent and Christmas season! Your support has been and continues to be valued!

Kristi Menix, Junior Warden

Saturday Eucharist

Our next Saturday afternoon Eucharist is scheduled for December 10 at 4 PM in the Parish Hall.

Christmas Card Party

It's time for our annual Christmas Card Party, so set aside Wednesday, December 7, and join us in the Parish Hall at 4:30 PM for a wonderful meal prepared and served by Santa Cruz Caterers. Christmas Music will be provided by guitarist Angel Perez.

The Christmas Card Party raises money for the St. Francis Covenant Fund. Established in 1993 by Dorothy Baldwin, the Covenant Fund provides temporary financial aid for needy St. Francis Parishioners. The fund is administered by the Rector. Here's how it works: Instead of sending cards to all your friends at St. Francis, just buy ONE card and put the money you save on cards and postage in the envelope and bring it along to the party. Your card will be placed on the tree in the Parish Hall where everyone will be able to enjoy it and the money you save will be donated to the St. Francis Covenant Fund.

The Party is a catered event and reservations are necessary; just call the Parish Office (520-625-1370), or stop in during the week, to make your reservation. Sign up sheets are available after Sunday services too.

How to Access Service Videos

Go to the Parish website (www.stfranciscgvaz.org), scroll down to the bottom of the page where you will see the current video, click on the arrow ▶ to start the video, and enjoy!

Shop the Boutique for Christmas!

The TALENTS UNLIMITED BOUTIQUE is now ready for you to do your Christmas shopping! Lots of unique, beautiful gifts at reasonable prices, so grab your coffee and come see! If you can't decide on something specific, we also have Gift Cards available for purchase. Shopping at the Boutique is so easy; and you are supporting a mission at St. Francis as All profits go directly to the Rector's Discretionary Fund. It's a win-win when you buy in the Boutique. *Jylene Wright*

New Advent Study

Fr. Warren is leading a four-week Advent Study class called LIVING WELL THROUGH ADVENT 2022. Join him in the Parish Hall from 10 to 11 am on Tuesdays, December 6 (Simplicity and Letting Go), December 13 (Simplicity and Joy), and December 20 (Simplicity and Faith). You can register for the class following Sunday services—and in the Parish Office during the week—or you may email Fr. Warren directly to let him know of your interest in the class (frwarren@stfranciscgvaz.org).

Handbell Ensemble

Our Handbell Ensemble will soon be rehearsing in the Choir Loft on Tuesdays at 3:30 PM and new members are welcome. If you can count to four and maintain a steady beat, you're in! Just contact Sophia Witte by text at 520-509-5037 or email at

Parish Choir

The St. Francis Parish Choir is back in session. Rehearsals are held at 2 PM on Thursdays in the Choir Loft. New members are always welcome and needed in all sections of the choir. Get in touch with the Choirmaster at gerald@stfranciscgvaz.org and let him know of your interest.

Prayer Chain

For Prayer Chain requests contact Jim Ratley at 253-365-5093 or, via email, at jnrats@gmail.com.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Judy Turberg
- 4 Beth McKibbin
- 4 Carol Sand
- 5 Justine Saavedra
- 6 Madeleine Glaser
- 6 Steve Smith
- 7 Jesse Figueroa
- 8 Christopher Nye
- 9 Neal Hursh
- 9 Carol Putnam
- 12 Ann Burton
- 14 Mizzy Diamond
- 15 Arnie Berglund
- 16 Bea Dow
- 18 Maureen Matto
- 20 Ann Zublin
- 22 Orji Isiogu
- 22 Rae Turberg
- 23 Karina Barnes
- 24 Jeanne Jones
- 24 Sandy Russell
- 26 Brenda Quick
- 27 Mary Hale
- 27 Janice Hall
- 28 Doris Kuzmak
- 29 Doris Nason
- 29 Richard Sand
- 30 Jenny Ryan
- 31 Carrie Malone

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Bob & Nancy Allen
- 3 Steve & Ann Burton
- 12 Victor & Mary Levine
- 14 John & Marylou Johnstone
- 17 Bill & Jane Barkley
- 17 Michael & Mary Staples
- 18 David & Jylene Wright
- 20 Bill & Jenny Ryan
- 22 Don & Diane Ward
- 23 David & Edna Dunn
- 27 Gary & Barbara La Barre

True Concord Lessons & Carols

Our friends from TRUE CONCORD *Voices and Orchestra* will be singing their annual Lessons & Carols concert here at St. Francis at 7 PM, Friday, December 16. Gerald has tickets priced at \$25 for general seating and \$42 for premium seating. (Cash or check—made out to True Concord—only, please.) Tickets may be available at the door but, as this is a very popular event, the concert may be sold out in advance. You may also purchase tickets through the Chamber of Commerce or the True Concord website (www.trueconcord.org).

Altar Flowers

Would you like to have flowers placed on the altar on a certain Sunday? Flowers may be given in loving memory of someone or in thanksgiving for a special person or occasion you wish to celebrate. Call the Carol Berg at (308-230-0605) with your request. Leave a message if she is unavailable. Flower donation is \$35.



PARISH MEETINGS AND EVENTS — DECEMBER 2022

Thursday, 1 December

Parish Choir, 2 PM, Loft

Monday, 5 December

Finance Committee, 11 AM, CfR

Tuesday, 6 December

Men's Group, 9 AM, CfR

Advent Study, 10 AM, PH

Handbells, 3:30 PM, Loft

Wednesday, 7 December

Holy Eucharist, 9 AM, Chapel

Xmas Card Party, 4:30 PM, PH

Thursday, 8 December

Parish Choir, 2 PM, Loft

Friday, 9 December

True Concord Concert, 7 PM, Ch

Saturday, 10 December

Holy Eucharist, 4 pm, PH

Tuesday, 13 December

Advent Study, 10 AM, PH

Handbells, 3:30 PM, Loft

Vestry, 4 PM, CfR

Wednesday, 14 December

Holy Eucharist, 9 AM, Chapel

Memorials Cmte, 10 AM, SFR

DOK Xmas Party, 10:30 AM, PH

Library Committee, 1 PM, L

Thursday, 15 December

Personnel Cmte, 10 AM, CfR

Parish Choir, 2 PM, Loft

Sunday, December 18

Blue Xmas Service, 3 PM, Ch

Monday, 19 December

Hearts & Hands, 10 AM, CfR

Tuesday, 20 December

Men's Group, 9 AM, CfR

Advent Study, 10 AM, PH

Handbells, 3:30 PM, Loft

Wednesday, 21 December

Holy Eucharist, 9 AM, Chapel

Thursday, 22 December

Parish Choir, 2 PM, Loft

Saturday, 24 December

Christmas Eve

Carols, 5:30 PM

The Holy Eucharist, 6 PM

Sunday, 25 December

Christmas Day

The Holy Eucharist, 9 am

Wednesday, 28 December

Holy Eucharist, 9 AM, Chapel

CALENDAR LEGEND

PH - Parish Hall

VR - Vulliamy Room

CfR - Conference Room

SFR - Saint Francis Room

L - Library

Arizona Episcopalian Magazine

The AZ Episcopalian magazine is now available online. The current issue has a variety of articles showcasing all the great things going on around the Diocese. If you would rather receive it by mail—or to sign up to receive it online—contact Deborah (Finance Officer) through the Parish Office (520-625-1370 or deborah@stfranciscgvaz.org) to sign up. It's FREE!

THE
Episcopal
CHURCH



2022 Parish Statistics

Transfers In

Mark & Tisha Stril

Ron & Mary Aigner

Carolyn Carter

New Members by Confirmation or Reception

Stewart McKendry

Myron Le Roy Kuebler

Christina Louise Kuebler

LeRoy Vaughn

Ceci Vaughn

Diane Ward

Rolando Altamirano

Transfers Out

Bill & Alicia Baucom

Al Saterbak

The Rev. Pat Kirk

Deaths

Jerry McAllister

Grace Marben

Julie Ratley

Barbara Phillips

Richard Tinney

Lee Cornelison

Nancy Pearce

Lois Weinert

Edith Hawkins

Al Bowman



Do we have...

your@e-mail.address?

RESERVING

MEETING TIME AND SPACE AT SAINT FRANCIS

Individuals wishing to reserve meeting space at St. Francis and/or discuss room set-ups should make those arrangements through Parish Administrator Gerald Near. It is **essential** your meeting be logged into the Master Calendar. If you need it, be sure to ask for 'set-up' and 'clean-up' time as part of your booking.

One week prior to your event please inventory the pantry next to the kitchen and let Gerald know if there are enough supplies to meet your needs. A parishioner usually shops for us twice a month. Thanks for your help and cooperation.

GETTING YOUR EVENT INTO

PARISH PUBLICATIONS

Sunday Bulletin notices should be given to the Parish Administrator by NOON the Tuesday prior to the Sunday you wish the notice to appear. Notices should be in written form and sent via email whenever possible.

Franciscan Staff material should be given to the Parish Administrator NO LATER THAN the 10th of the month preceding publication.

ADDRESS CHANGES

Please let us know if your e-mail address, street address, zip code or telephone number changes. Get in touch with Deborah Harby in the Parish Financial Office to update your information for our records.

ST. FRANCIS-IN-THE-VALLEY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
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Green Valley AZ 85614

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