



The Herald

St. Raphael the Archangel Episcopal Church

Vol 57 - Issue 7

Advent & Christmas 2022

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From Our Rector

We are at the end of the church year. The Feast of Christ the King is the bookend to both the end and the beginning of the church calendar, and we now move from a focus on Luke to a focus on Matthew. If you would like to get a broad overview of the gospel of Matthew, I invite you to take a look at the 50 Day study of Matthew that we have available for sale on the entrance stand.



**Rev. Canon Dr. Helen
Van Koevering**

With the message of Christ the King, we move into Advent. We have tended to have our Annual meeting (and a parish brunch!) on that day for the last few years, and maybe, like me, you might've missed a focus on the readings with a sermon. This year, the appointed gospel is Luke 23: 33-43: the crucifixion of Christ, the mocking taunt of his title 'King of the Jews', and the criminals' questions about his identity as the Messiah. Who is this Jesus, who speaks about forgiveness, God's Kingdom, a King who died on a Cross?

Different perspectives interpret the message of the Cross differently: on the one hand, the Cross speaks of uncompromising demands and judgement, human fallenness requiring only individual conversion, and getting right with God (atonement) as keeping others out. If we read Luke from within our present culture, we might see that the Cross points to healing, inclusion, and all the other ways Luke shows us God's saving love in Jesus that dismantles all that stands in the way of God's intention for all creation. The Cross shows us the power of all that opposes God's way, but the direction set in the wilderness and in Gethsemane remains. Jesus forgives 'for they know not what they are doing.' And he faithfully witnesses to God's nature by not choosing to save himself rather than us. God's power holds all of life and death.

And this is Good News! In this beautiful, pandemic-ridden, rapidly changing world, God's mission in Jesus and the mission of the church are raising questions again about Jesus - who he is and what that means to us all in our world today. And we agree that both the mission of God and the Church is centered on the Christ who shows

Continued on the next page

Worship

Sundays

Holy Eucharist Rite I
8:30 a.m.

Holy Eucharist Rite II with music
11:00 a.m.

Wednesdays

Eucharist with Healing
Noon

Compline

Sundays, Tuesdays, and Fridays
7:00 p.m.

From Our Rector, continued

the world in his life, death and resurrection just how extensive and deep is saving love. And the weeks of Advent will remind us of this saving love as having everything to do with looking forward with hope, peace and joy to the life of the new-born King, Emmanuel with us!

Take note of the events and services in Advent and Christmas, and be with us as we travel this season together. Take note of the times of services, the days when there is just one service at 10am, our Blue Christmas service for those struggling with this jolly season for any reason, and especially join us the 'Holiday Kick-Off & Open House' fun and food on December 4. Practice hospitality and invite your friends to join us! I look forward to seeing you!

God bless,

Helen

Rev Helen

Annual Parish Meeting is Sunday, November 20 at 10:00 am

We will have **one service**, and the meeting will take the place of the sermon and announcements. **We'll vote** for three Vestry members plus four delegates and four alternates to the 2023 Diocesan Convention, October 28, 2023 at the Cathedral Domain. If you are interested in serving, please tell Rev. Helen.

It is also our **Stewardship Campaign In-gathering day!** If you haven't made your 2023 pledge to support St. Raphael's please prayerfully consider doing so.

After the Annual Meeting, please enjoy an old-fashioned **potluck lunch!** Please bring a dish to share.

Suggestions: a casserole, salad, plate of sandwiches, deviled eggs, fruit, veggies and dip, cookies... Hungry yet?

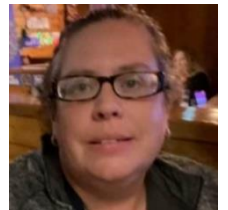
November 20th is Christ the King Sunday, and the last Sunday of the church year, so this is also a year-end celebration for us. Hope to see you there!

Vestry Candidates



Kathy Gannoe St. Raphael has become my church home over the past year and a half. It has been a joy to worship here and to see opportunities for service. My entire life my husband and I were involved in church work at every level. I welcome the opportunity to use these experiences at St. Raphael. Professionally my work has been advocacy for persons in the disability and the aging community. Now that I am retired and widowed, I look to my new church family for opportunities to serve and to fellowship.

Amanda Whorley (CBH) I grew up attending St Raphael's. I have good memories of serving as an acolyte, crucifer and singing in the choir as a preteen and teenager. While in college I attended Good Shepherd. When my kids and I needed extra love and support we returned to St Raphael's. I am a social worker working at Baptist Health Hospital in Lexington for 11 years. I have three children Isaac, 20; Mason, 15; and Alaina, 13. I have enjoyed serving on the Altar Guild for many years and recently assisting with Children's Chapel. I am grateful to be able to serve on the Vestry at St. Raphael's. I love that our church is warm and welcoming!



Alex Bongard I was a cradle Episcopalian at St. Raphael's and served on the Vestry when I was in high school. I got engaged to Nisa Ingram and we wanted to be married in the church. Rev. Helen officiated at our wedding November 5. I am currently working at Target while studying to become a History teacher. Since attending regularly again I have reconnected with parishioners I remember as a youth and have met some who have joined in the interim. I am excited to serve on the Vestry again and provide a perspective from my generation.

Senior Warden's Corner

One of the things I enjoy about being an Episcopalian is that while the rest of the world insists on rushing from Thanksgiving or Halloween immediately to Christmas, we take our time and enjoy the season of Advent.



Amy Smereck

Advent is its own season, not just a frantic hustling bustling to-doing and overdoing interlude between the other holidays. It is an opportunity for reflection and contemplation. It is a season of waiting, but not passive waiting. Alert waiting, expectant waiting. A season of preparation, as much inward as outward. If you do Advent right, then when Christmas Eve comes you will be less likely to be at your wit's

end and poised for a post-holiday letdown and will be ready to joyfully celebrate the gift of the Christ child.

What are some of the ingredients of a well-celebrated Advent? Personally, I find our Sunday services and music to be an important part. You are invited to help prepare the church for Christmas with greenery and Chrismon tree November 26. Invite a neighbor to our Advent Lessons and Carols and Holiday Kick-off Open House Potluck. Give to others you don't know through our Reverse Advent Calendar. Bring a baby gift Christmas Eve. There are many Advent activities at St. R's presented in this Herald. Don't forget to take some personal quiet time to marvel and wonder about Christ's birth.

—Amy Smereck

Advent Lessons and Carols & Holiday Kick-Off Open House Potluck

The Holiday Kick-Off and Open House Potluck will follow the Advent Lessons and Carols service on December 4 at 11 am.

- Pot-Luck luncheon following the service
- Door Prizes
- Quilt Raffle
- Kids Activities

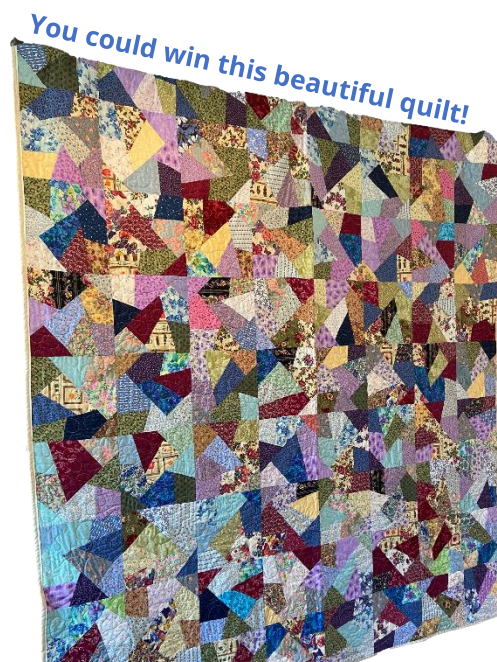


Join us as we kick off the holiday season and open our house to past, present, and future members and their guests. All are welcome. Masks may be worn. We wish to welcome anyone interested in checking out Saint Raphael.

Help with the following items is appreciated:

- Bring a side dish, salad, or dessert
- Craft, solicit, or donate items for Door Prizes (gift cards, gift baskets, crafted items)
- Sell raffle tickets for the quilt raffle – hanging in the church foyer – Nancy's scrappy quilt, Queen size
- Volunteer to help in the kitchen, set up, clean up, door prizes, etc.
- Invite your friends, family, and neighbors
- Share the [Facebook event](#) to your page and contacts

Contact Nancy Christiano by email, text, or phone: nancy.christiano@gmail.com 502-641-5431



HAVE NEWS FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE?

Send articles and information for the Epiphany issue to Amy Smereck at amy.smereck@gmail.com. The submission deadline is January 3.

Money Talk

Over the last month, the Finance Committee has been drafting the budget for 2023. This draft will be presented to the vestry on November 15th and includes a modest increase in income and expenses (both less than the inflation rate). Our 2023 pledge campaign is underway and should be completed by Nov 30-so if you haven't pledged yet, please consider pledging-it really helps us manage the business aspects of the church. A strong ministry tenant (The Lexington Church) has helped stabilize the budget in 2022 and we look forward to a continued relationship in 2023-because without them, our situation would be more austere.

There are several initiatives being discussed for 2023 that have financial implications-including the modernization of our HVAC systems, and stronger building security and access. There are plans to apply for grants to cover a portion of these, but they may require a separate fundraising effort to begin implementation. Work has also begun as a result on a series of grants on Tobit's Trace to improve that feature of our property. We are being great stewards of the gifts God has provided and we really appreciate your continued support of our ministry through the advent season and 2023.

—Dave Seigny

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:2

Please continue to support St. Raphael's.

We use Engage for online giving. To access Engage and set up your user account, please click [here](#). You can also access the page via the menu on our website at sreclex.org.

From the Properties Committee

The Property Committee remains quite busy improving our building and grounds, while also lengthening the working life of our equipment and facilities. And we truly appreciate the volunteers who have worked diligently on tackling outside projects and on planning for future ones.

We made it through another season of cooling with our current ancient HVAC units. Some are as old as 1989 models. The Property Committee has submitted a long-term replacement plan to the Vestry. The Vestry is currently studying that proposal.

There are currently underway several "outside" projects either in process or planned. A number of older and dead trees have been removed. A congregant's relative is currently looking at coming up with a sustainable and low maintenance plan for several improvements, particularly in the Columbarium area of the church. And the Fall cleanup process has begun.

Plans are underway for the deep clean of the church in preparation for the onset of the season.

And we are nearly finished with the replacement of all our current incandescent lights with LED lighting. This is not only better for our "green" status but helps in a small way with our electrical and mechanical costs. The comments from the congregation have been very positive to this point.

—Roger Kirk

Music, Live and Alive at St. Raphael's

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year

We hear that on the radio far too soon these days. Some radio stations start playing Christmas music on the first day of November. But before the church joins in singing the hymns and carols of Christmas, we have Advent, which is also a wonderful time of the year from a liturgical standpoint.

Each year we prepare ourselves for the birth of Christ in a myriad of ways. It could be something as simple as an Advent calendar. Or maybe you have a favorite devotion book. There is music, which also plays an important part in this time of preparation.



Clif Cason

On December 4, the choir will lead us in a service titled **Advent Lessons and Carols**. You will enjoy the wide variety of music styles in the choir's anthems as well as the beautiful hymn, "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming," which the congregation and choir will sing during Communion.

On Christmas Eve you are in for a musical Christmas gift at both services. The first service will feature our children in a musical titled "The Best Old-Fashioned Christmas Pageant Ever!" Our vocal scholars, Mason Franklin and Sarah Wiseman, will lead the children in this wonderful collection of familiar Christmas hymns and carols. The best part of the musical is that the congregation will join the children in singing "The First Nowell" and "Angels We Have Heard on High." Another special gift will be Kris Olson returning to lead us in "Silent Night" at the end.

If you want to sing more Christmas carols and hymns, come back at 10:00pm. The congregation and choir will sing "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "Joy to the World" and "Angels We Have Heard on High." The choir will also sing two anthems and our new vocal scholar, Carrie Moscoe, will be featured in the solo "Rejoice, Rejoice Greatly" from Handel's Messiah. The music continues at 10:30pm as we sing "O Come, All Ye Faithful" for the Processional hymn. More gifts occur during the service including Michael Cannon singing "O Holy Night." The service ends with the traditional lighting of the candles while singing "Silent Night."

You can't ask for a better Christmas Eve. Advent will lead us to that glorious moment. Please plan to be here during this "most wonderful time of the year."

—*Clif Cason*

The Best Old-Fashioned Christmas Pageant Ever!

It's not too late for your child or grandchild to take part in our Christmas pageant. This is a low-stress performance opportunity where children can gain confidence appearing in front of a supportive audience as they act out and sing the Christmas story.

Our vocal scholars are working with the children on singing during part of the Children's Chapel time (11 am services). There is a **rehearsal Saturday, December 17 at 10 am**.

Costumes will be fitted during the rehearsal, which will be followed by Christmas cookie decorating. The pageant will be presented at the **5:30 service Christmas Eve**.

Contact Clif Cason for more information.



From our Ministry Committee

Godly Play program intentionally serves children's relationship with God

At Saint Raphael, our Sunday School for children is called Godly Play. This program has been a success in churches around the world for quite some time. Deacon Lois Howard, a Godly Play teacher and trainer of teachers in the Diocese of Lexington and beyond, has generously provided Saint Raphael with donations of materials and items necessary for a successful program. We are fortunate to have willing volunteers who are trained as teachers and aides. Janis Rosebrook, Diane Whorley, Amanda Whorley, and Tim Allen, along with my assistance from time to time, have begun implementation of the curriculum.

Godly Play was developed by an Episcopal priest, Dr. Jerome Berryman, in 1984 at his home parish in Houston. This program is inspired by Jerome's many years of work with children and his advanced Montessori studies with Sofia Cavaletti, a major Montessori contributor, in 1971.

Everything that happens in a Godly Play classroom - the classroom setup, the carefully chosen and placed materials, and the management of the children - serves the child's relationship with God. Additionally, what we have discovered is the Godly Play program is strengthening our teachers' faith relationships with Christ. We are free to focus on spiritual preparation and relationship-building between teachers, children, families, and Christ. This is the work Christ calls each of us to do. We invite you to visit our Godly Play classroom (when class is not in session) to admire the work Janis and Diane have put into organizing and cataloging the supplies. Thanks to Mike Booth for doing the necessary carpentry work. Join us all in praying for our beloved Saint Raphael children and for children and families whom we pray are led to our Church.

—Sister Becky

Young People's Ministry

Volunteers are busy developing a plan to offer opportunities for the youth in our church, **ages 12 and up**, to gather for fun and fellowship.

Our first gathering will be **Friday, December 30, from 6:00 pm 'til 9:00 pm in the Parish Hall**. So far, we know there will be games, arts and crafts, probably goofiness, and lots of FOOD. Anyone interested in helping out can see me, Sister Becky. Encourage your teenagers to bring their friends as we begin this venture into the virtual unknown. And please pray for the kids.

—Sister Becky



Prayer for Children and Families

God, send your Holy Spirit to open our eyes and minds to be the church that nurtures children, young people and families to belong and fully participate in God's Mission. Amen.

"Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me."

Matthew 18:3-5

from our Ministry Committee

All women are invited to be part of the Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

Saint Raphael has a vibrant and active chapter of Episcopal Church Women. The mission of ECW is to empower women to do Christ's ministry in the world. This is demonstrated at Saint Raphael by members' personal interest and involvement in the dedicated missions of our Church.

Our meetings are held once a month, on the 4th Sunday, after the 11 am service. The next meeting is **November 27**. The women of our church have prayer, eat a light lunch together, and get down to business. We adopt one mission each month on which to concentrate, and members help with a variety of needs. Working from an agenda, after business sometimes we discuss scripture. Sometimes we share personal stories and listen to each other. Meetings usually last 30-45 minutes. All Episcopal women are automatically considered members of ECW. It is a joyful ministry in which to take part. It costs nothing to be a member, and we find the rewards are immeasurable. Come and join us!

— Sister Becky



ECW's Annual Christmas Party

We will meet Saturday, December 10, at 11:30 am in the Parish Hall. Lunch will be catered. The tradition of the Ornament Exchange will continue, so please bring an ornament to share.



Join the Altar Guild on Saturday, November 26, at 10 am, to begin decorating St. Raphael's for the Advent season. We'll set the altar with our newest hangings, prepare the Advent Wreath for lighting each Sunday, & decorate our Chrismon Tree with needlepoint religious symbols & other ornaments handmade by members of the congregation.

This is a fun intergenerational activity for adults and children to share, so bring the kids. Refreshments will be served. Hope to see you there!

Blue Christmas Eucharist

Wednesday, December 14, Noon

For those living with grief, addiction, depression and other mental health issues, and the like, society's 24/7 merry and jolly message doesn't fit, and may lead them to opt out of the season entirely. Our Blue Christmas service frames Advent and Christmas in a quieter, more contemplative light so worshipers can find peace and hope. All are welcome.



From our Mission Committee

BUILD tackles community problems at assembly

The Community Problems Assembly was held on Nov. 7th, the first in-person meeting since 2019. There were 7 of us in attendance representing St. Raphael's. Among the 26 congregations, Good Shepherd & Christ Church Cathedral were also there. Bishop Mark Van Koevering offered a prayer in the Episcopal tradition.

In addition to an Education update on Restorative Practices, we also heard updates & testimonies on the current campaigns: Mental Health/Transportation, Violence, & Affordable Housing. Research is ongoing for each of these issues. In April, we would like to request your presence at the Nehemiah Action to bring our concerns to the local officials in our community. BUILD is committed to ensuring equal justice for all our citizens.

—Diane Whorley



Reverse Advent Calendar

This Advent Calendar is about giving, not getting. Purchase items and bring them to church. We will distribute them to local organizations serving vulnerable children and families.

November

27 Canned Beans
28 Note Cards
29 Postage Stamps
30 Cleaning Supplies

6 Deodorant
7 New socks (all sizes)
8 Canned vegetables
9 Rice

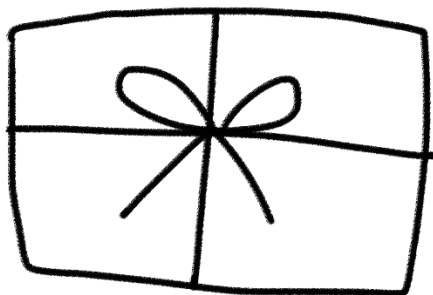
16 Feminine hygiene items
17 Pasta
18 Canned pasta sauce
19 Canned fruit

December

1 Packaged snacks
2 Individual fruit cups
3 Baby diapers and wipes
4 Toothpaste and toothbrush
5 Gloves

10 Cereal
11 Soups
12 Tuna and crackers
13 Peanut butter
14 Tissues
15 Toilet paper

20 Mac and cheese
21 Granola bars
22 Scarves and hats
23 Dessert mix
24 Blanket
25 \$25 Kroger Cards



Bring a gift for baby Jesus!

At both Christmas Eve services we will be collecting gifts for newborns to be distributed to needy infants and Moms-to-be in our community.

Suggested items: socks, onesies, diapers, blankets, hats, mittens, undershirts, pajamas, snow suits. Please wrap them in plain white tissue. We will bring them to the altar and bless them and their recipients.

Image by RawPixel.com

Advent: The Get Ready! Season

The humorist James Thurber wrote a story, "The Car We Had to Push," in which he described a man who went around the streets of his hometown, Columbus, Ohio, shouting "Get Ready! The world is coming to an end." They called him the "Get Ready Man."

If in December you hear somebody shouting Get Ready!, even if it's only a voice in your head, you will probably think not of the Second Coming of Christ but of the hundreds of things you think you have to do before Christmas: Gift buying, baking, decorating, writing and mailing cards, donations, going to concerts, pageants, parties—burdens we lay on ourselves but want to do even while we complain about stress and fatigue. Remember, a priest said in a Christmas sermon, "It's not your birthday."

Advent is the only season on the Church calendar that looks in two very different directions at the same time. The Gospel readings for Advent are on being ready for the Last Judgment (Mt 3 and 24). Most of us are probably not too anxious about the Second Coming of Christ—we were sealed as Christ's own forever in baptism. What Advent offers us is a time to turn away from the secular busyness to spiritual preparation for the celebration of the great festival of the birth of the Savior, when love came down from Heaven to earth. We sing the very beautiful Advent carols—"O Come, O Come Emmanuel," or my favorite, "There Shall Come Forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jesse." On Christmas Eve we will sing Christmas carols.

Through the centuries, Christmas celebration has rolled along, from the simple story told by Luke, picking up legends, customs, stories, and song, until in this century it's observed, at least in its secular aspects, all over the world by people of different religions or no religion. The reason is obvious. The story itself is beyond wonderful. The message, "God So Loved the World," is powerful. For the Church, Christmas is the one time when the eyes of the world are focused on our religion. It's the time for us to shout to the world, like Gladys in "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever," "Hey! Unto us a child is born!"

—*Rose Canon*

Let's fill the Church with Poinsettias for Christmas!

It is our tradition that during the season of Advent the altar is decorated only with greenery, no flowers. Then on Christmas Eve, a festive explosion of bright red poinsettias adorns the sanctuary and nave thanks to the Altar Guild and our donors. Poinsettias are 1 for \$15 or two for \$25.



Please consider giving a gift of poinsettias in honor, thanksgiving, or memory of someone dear. If you like, your designation will be printed in the Christmas Eve service bulletin. When using our online giving portal at sreclex.org/give, indicate your intentions (names and statements as you'd like them printed in the bulletin) in the Memo field at the end of the transaction. If you prefer to give a check, please write the information in the Memo area.

Need a gift idea for the person who is hard to buy for? Give a poinsettia in their honor and we will send a card announcing your gift. If you'd like a card mailed, please include the address in the Memo area or email Amy at amy.smereck@gmail.com. You may take poinsettias home after the Christmas season if you like. No poinsettias will be shipped.

Another View from the Pew

The season in verse by our members

Sleep, precious Babe
In Mary's womb,
Your time is coming,
The world in ignorance
Circles round pale winter sun
Waiting, waiting, waiting,
Not knowing You will
Break the bonds of custom
To bring the truth of greatest love
Greatest freedom
And lead us to salvation.

Happy New Year! Advent is a time
of reflection to make ready for the
miracle of Birth.

—Charlotte Johnson

Blessed Mary
Large with Child
Soon, soon
Your time is coming
To deliver
The greatest Gift
To all mankind,
In our time
Of plague and
Waiting
May we keep you
In our hearts.

—Charlotte Johnson

A Child To Be Born

Thanksgiving's over, the turkey has been spent,
It is time to begin to think about the season of Advent.
This is a different season that this Baptist-raised found new,
A time for preparation for the Lord, by me and you.
When He was just a babe in womb, his father did not believe,
But an angel came to him in sleep, and through dreams, he was relieved,
That Mary was his most, pure wife, the mother who would bore,
the infant child who would soon become the Savior of the world.
So Mary journeyed to her cousin's home, a hundred miles away,
A quarter of a mile did rise the path she trekked, they say,
A path known for the bandits who would kill for a bekal or less,
But Mary was protected as her task was to address
The coming of a babe to her cousin Elizabeth
An older, childless woman who conceived, miraculous!
When Mary greeted Elizabeth, her babe, John, it jumped we're told,
That he would be the cousin of God's son, that Isaiah foretold.
T'was 700 years before that Isaiah did foretell,
A virgin would conceive and bear a child, "Immanuel".
And John, in womb, had known this too, his cousin would be Most High,
The One, that John would not be worthy His sandals to untie.

—Ben Harper



Saint Nicholas Day Retreat to Gethsemane Abbey

On Tuesday, December 6, a group from St. Raphael will gather at 8:30 am in the church parking lot to facilitate car-pooling. The trip is about an hour's drive each way. We will spend the first hour or so at the Abbey to visit the statues, and then Rev. Helen has a brief Living Advent Well study for participants. We will visit the shop and information center, walk the grounds, and attend the 12:15 pm service. Please bring your own packed lunch and beverages. If you are interested in joining, please contact Erika Mayers or Rev. Helen.

Gospel of Matthew Study Continues during Advent

We meet in the Bride's Room at 10 am Sunday mornings. If you prefer to study on your own, copies of the book "A Journey with Matthew" are available for sale at church for \$10.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

November 16 Guy H
November 21 Nancy C M
November 22 Ann R
December 3 Sarah E
December 6 Beverly B
December 6 Jamie D

December 7 James M
December 15 Amy L
December 21 Paula B
December 21 Rev. Helen
December 25 Jeannie G
December 26 Marie S

December 30 Terri B
December 30 Paula S

Anniversaries

Nov. 30 Patty Bond & Jack Supplee
Dec 17 Helen & Moses Massaquoi

Prayers Requested

Long term prayer list: Hilda, Mary Jane, Roy, Joan, Martha Helen, Pat Dinsmore, Steve & Ginger, Rose, Sonya, Sarah, Annette, Mary, Kenneth & Seth, Anisa, Mickie, Jim C, Andree, Sheenagh, Peggy and Sue, CC, Margaret G.

Currently in need of prayer: Hannah & Volodymr, Jerry & Trudy, Larry, Liz, Heather.

Recently deceased: Robin Smith

Pray for those who have died from Covid-19. Pray for the people of Ukraine, Afghanistan, the military, and nations in conflict. Pray for victims of flooding (especially in Eastern Kentucky, Pakistan, India, Florida, and South Carolina).

Please keep in your prayers all who have fallen ill from Covid-19. Please stay safe and find ways to stay connected and express love for one another while following recommended health guidelines.

News from our Diocese

Message from the Diocesan Creation Care Committee

The Creation Care committee urges all of the Diocese of Lexington's faith communities to engage in prayerful action to prevent the worst of what climate change can be. Their recommendations include planting and maintaining trees, improving building energy efficiency, and advocacy in our state and communities. Read more, including a link to a report with examples of Creation Care from parishes including St. R's here:

sreclex.org/diolex-creation-care

Diocesan Vision Prayer

Gracious Father, your Spirit *connects* and *restores* all life to unity with You and each other in Christ Jesus. *Energize* our faith so that we may courageously live into our calling to *be the Church* by praising your Holy Name, making disciples, and discovering your presence at work in our neighborhoods. Shape us to *be the change* that brings hope and joy to an aching world; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever, *Amen*.

Keep up with news from around our Diocese.

Subscribe to the Diocesan email newsletter using the form found at <http://diolink.org/diolex/index.php/newsandevents/>.



Celebrate Advent and Christmas with us!

Dec. 4, 11 am Advent Lessons and Carols & Holiday Kick-Off
Open House Potluck

December 10, 11:30 am ECW Luncheon

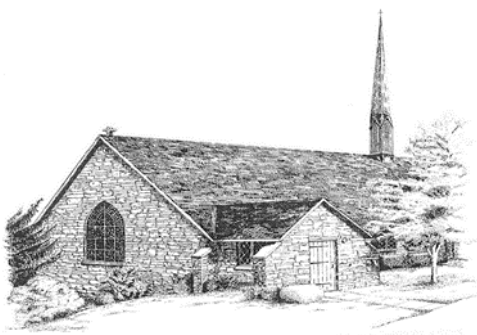
December 14, Noon, Blue Christmas Eucharist

December 24, 5:30 pm Christmas Eve Service and Pageant

December 24, 10 pm Christmas Eve Service

December 25, 10 am Christmas Day Service

January 1, 10 am New Year's Day Service



St. Raphael Episcopal Church
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