

From Father Nik

This Sunday is the first Sunday of Advent. Advent, in turn, is the first season of the new liturgical year. It's a good thing, if not intuitive, to remember that the Church's calendar is not identical to the secular calendar. For the Church, the New Year doesn't begin with a ball dropped in Times Square or a party or kissing the nearest loved one, friend, or stranger. The Church doesn't ring in the New Year on January 1st with overly ambitious and hastily forgotten resolutions boldly inscribed on inspirational sticky notes stuck to the bathroom mirror or pinned to the fridge door by a magnet. For the Church, the New Year begins four Sundays before Christmas amid the gathering darkness of late autumn. For the Church, the New Year is rung in with the flame of a single candle, a slight flicker in the dark, kindling the desire for the coming of the light of the world, which the darkness cannot overcome (Jn 1:5).

Many clergy and laity who are aware of the importance and meaning of Advent can't help but bemoan the way Christmas—(particularly, in its most secular and commercial aspects)—has overtaken the first season of the Church year. Even some from less liturgical, more evangelical churches have discovered the tradition of Advent to counter the sprawl of the commercial Christmas. Valiant as this effort may be, though, it's probably to little avail given that Christmas decorations appear in the stores the day after Halloween and Santa arrives at the end of the Macy's parade on Thanksgiving Day. Those of us who get frustrated by the all-consuming Christmas have simply forgotten how exciting it was for us as children.

Every tree alight, every sighting of Santa in the parade, every decoration in a home or store fuels and ignites a child's desire for Christmas Day. And in this way, it's not so different from the practices of Advent. The gathering light of the Advent Wreath, the contemplative reading of God's promises in the Old Testament, and the prayerful recitation of Mary's Magnificat are all ways to prepare our hearts for and focus our desires towards the coming of Christ, which we celebrate on Christmas. And this helps us to see that a similar thing happens each Sunday at worship. The liturgy—the prayers, the hymns, the reading of Scripture and its exposition in the homily, the recitation of the Creed, the offering of our gifts—prepares our hearts for and focuses our desires towards Christ, so that we might see him by faith giving himself to us in the consecrated bread and wine of the Eucharist.

Nik+

Coffee Hour

Thanks to Beverly & Laura Smith for hosting today's refreshments!!
Mac and Vicky Chenault will be hosting next Sunday's refreshments
Volunteers are still needed for Sundays in December

To sign up, please go to

www.SignUpGenius.com/go/9040449A5AA2FA57-coffee/25614452

Peter Paul Development Center

Christmas Gifts for the children of PPDC

Make your check payable to Fork Church,
put PPDC on the memo line, and place your gift in the collection plate on
Sunday, Nov 29, Dec 6, & Dec 13

You can also place cash in an envelope with PPDC on the front
or mail your check to Fork Church.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

The Flower Guild is preparing to green our sanctuary for Christmas.

Please consider making a gift

in Honor or Memory of someone meaningful in your life.

These will be published in the

Christmas Eve and Christmas service bulletins.

Please make your check payable to Fork Church Altar Guild by Dec 15.

(Suggested donation is \$25)

Send check with order form to:

Emily Dickson , 15003 Lane Mill Rd., Montpelier, VA 23192

Questions? Contact Emily at 339-1757 or emily.appleseed@gmail.com

Advent Wreaths

We'll be making Advent Wreaths to take home
after worship today, Sunday, November 29th – Cost: \$10.
Notify Boo if interested: 804-357-3319 or boosmythe@gmail.com

Bishop's Visit

Retired Suffragan Bishop, the Rt. Rev'd David Jones
will be with us for Sunday morning worship on December 20.

Christian Education

Godly Play Children are invited to hear the Word in a fun, learning environment in the Parish House during the first half of our Sunday morning worship; after which, they join their parents in church for Communion.

J2A Youth Group will meet Sunday December 6, at 5:30pm, in the parish hall. Bring a gift of \$5 or less for the “White Elephant” gift exchange.

The Adult Sunday School meets Sunday mornings at 9am in the parish hall to explore the Sacraments.

Small Groups

The Women’s Book Group will discuss the fifth section of *Searching for Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans, “Confirmation” on Thursday, December 3, at 10am. Please contact Kathy for directions:

boysthree@embarqmail.com

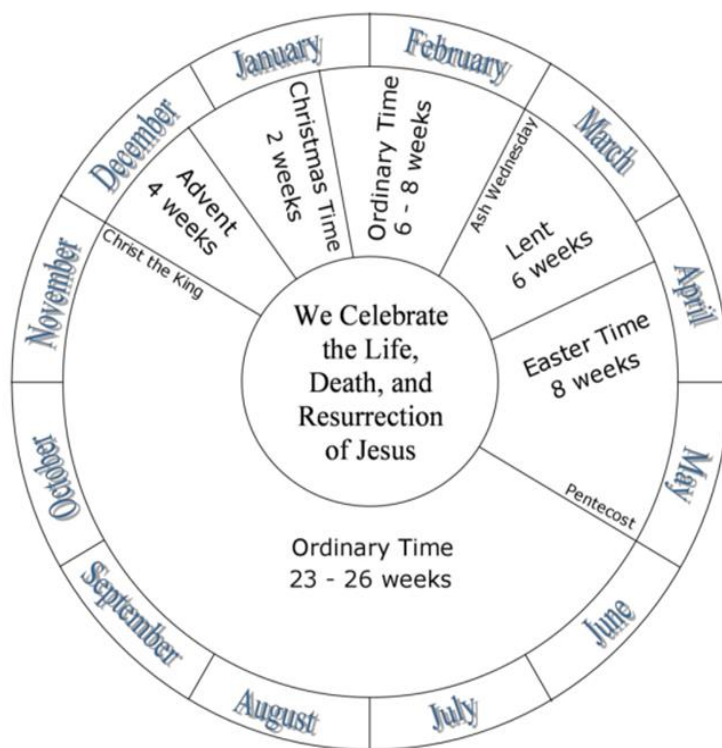
The Men’s Book Group will meet Thursday, December 3, at 7:30am at Ashland Coffee & Tea to discuss the fifth section of *Searching for Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans, “Confirmation,” (pp 161-199)

Christian Formation

The *Way of Discipleship* class for Confirmation & Reception meets on Wednesdays at 6:30pm.

If you’re interested in being Baptized or would like to become a member of this Church, please contact Fr Nik – KNicholasForti@gmail.com

The Liturgical Year



Nik's Calendar

Monday, Nov 30 – Coffee with the Rev'd Dr Ed Bushong, 10:30am-12:30pm
– PPDC Chapel, 5:30-6:30pm

Tuesday, Dec 1 – Clergy Colleague Group, 9:30-11:30am

Thursday, Dec 3 – Meeting with the RMC Chaplain, 10-11am

Tuesday, Dec 8 – Lunch with the Rev'd Brain Turner, noon (Fredericksburg)

Wednesday, Dec 9 – St. James the Less Free Clinic dinner, 5:30-8pm

Thursday, Dec 10 – Fresh Start, 9:30am-3:30pm

Looking Ahead

Thursday, Nov 26 – Thanksgiving Day Eucharist, 10am

Sunday, Nov 29 – Advent Wreath making after worship in the Parish Hall

Wednesday, Dec 2 – Confirmation/Reception class, 6:30pm

– Choir Rehearsal, 7pm

Thursday, Dec 3 – Men's Book Group, 7:30-8:30am

– Women's Book Group, 10am-noon

Sunday, Dec 6 – Youth Group Christmas Party, 5:30-7:30pm

Office hours: Jacquie Alleva, our parish secretary, works Tuesday & Wednesday mornings and Thursday afternoons. If you would like to submit an announcement, please do so by noon on Thursday.