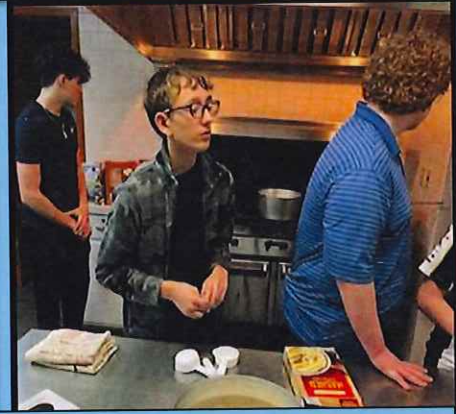


# Church of the Good Shepherd



**Thanksgiving Dinner Prepared by the Confirmation Students.**





# THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – DECEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2024

## Week of December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Calendar of Events

**Rosary** 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every month 20 minutes before 9am Mass

**Monday, December 16th**

**Tuesday, December 17th**

**Wednesday, December 18th**

**Thursday, December 19th**

**Friday, December 20th**

REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR OUR HOMEBOUND, THOSE  
ON OUR PRAYER CHAIN AND THE HOSPITALIZED

## Church of the Good Shepherd

**Office Phone:** (724)528-3539

**Office Address:** 3613 Sharon Road

(PO Box 226)

West Middlesex, PA 16159

**PASTOR – Fr. Glenn Whitman**

Email: [pastor@goodshepherdwm.org](mailto:pastor@goodshepherdwm.org)

**RELIGIOUS ED DIR. – Lauren DeFelice**

Email: [religioused@goodshepherdwm.org](mailto:religioused@goodshepherdwm.org)

**PARISH SECRETARY – Patty Babcanec**

Email: [parishoffice@goodshepherdwm.org](mailto:parishoffice@goodshepherdwm.org)

**MUSIC DIRECTOR – Greg Hansley**

**PLANT MAINTENANCE – Gary Wojtalik**

**KITCHEN MANAGER – Michelle Whalen**

**PRAYER REQUEST**

Email: [prayerrequestsgswm@gmail.com](mailto:prayerrequestsgswm@gmail.com)

Phone: (724)977-3369

### COLLECTION

12/08/24

# of Registered Families 566

# of Envelopes Used 276

Attendance at Mass 434

Attendance Online 208

Offertory Collection \$5,570.50

Loose Offertory \$1,052.00

Christmas (Offertory / Gift) \$26.00 / \$21.00

Christmas Flowers \$724.00

Religious Retirement \$1,056.50

Thanksgiving \$65.00

### Mass Intention Date & Time

### Intentions

### Requested By

Monday, December 16th at 8:30am

**For Our Parishioners Living and Deceased**

Tuesday, December 17th at 8:30am

**Greg Scarmack**

**Ed Robich**

Wednesday, December 18th

**NO MASS & NO COMMUNION SERVICE**

Thursday, December 19th at 8:30am

**Msgr. Robert Malene**

**Craig & Debbie Cox**

Friday, December 20th at 8:30am

**David T. David**

**Children & Grandchildren**

Saturday, December 21st at 6:00pm

**Ross Ernest Holsapfel**

**Mom Patty**

Sunday, December 22nd at 9:00am

**Mary Ann Mihalcak**

**Family of Dave David**

Sunday, December 22nd at 11:30am

**Jeff Van Buren**

**Mary Ann & Sons**

### LITURGICAL MINISTRY SCHEDULE

#### LECTOR

#### EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

#### USHERS (HU – Head Usher)

#### GREETERS

#### ALTAR SERVERS

**SATURDAY**  
December 21st  
6:00pm

Donna Pavlovich  
John Pavlovich

Phyllis Williams  
James Sobey  
Cliff Sederland  
Brian Rogers

Mat Macchia – HU  
Mona Macchia  
Patrick Chovan

Carol Baker

Alexa Macchia  
Antonio Macchia

**SUNDAY**  
December 22nd  
9:00am

Carol Gilliland

Howard Fagan  
Ken Garver  
Marsha Garver  
Diane O'Rourke

Bob Devlin – HU  
Darlene Kotuby  
Don Kotuby

Tom Graney

Madison  
McClelland

**SUNDAY**  
December 22nd  
11:30am

Zoe Belcik

Mary Lu Walters  
Judy Miller  
Ted George  
Beth Garrett

**VOLUNTEER** – HU  
Don Kemerer  
Ann U'Halie

**VOLUNTEER**

Olivia Gingras



# CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD, WEST MIDDLESEX, PA

(These 3 reflections are based on the three readings for Sunday.)



## FROM OUR PASTOR

*“Shout for joy! Your enemies have been chased off. The Lord God is in your midst and God will sing joyfully because of you. (Zephaniah)”*

God will sing for you! Wonder what that sounds like? Scripture tells us about angels, children, choirs, priests and prophets singing, even King David singing and dancing. Though the analogy pales in comparison, imagine God standing under the balcony of the beloved (you) like Romeo and Juliet, except that God sings of love and desire for you!

God singing! Conjure up in your mind’s eyes/ears God first singing at creation, bringing every creature into perfect alignment, from the largest galaxy to the smallest single celled life form. Imagine what harmony that must have sounded like, and if the OT prophets were correct in alerting us that God yearned for “justice and peace to kiss,” those might be the basic tones/music of creation. And perhaps God’s song will be heard when that basic duet can run unrestrained in our time and place again.

*How do we contribute to the song of justice and peace?*

*“Rejoice in the Lord all day, every day. It’s wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life.” (Philippians)*

How near is the Lord to your heart? Where does God figure in your list of priorities? Top 5? Back burner? However you answer, don’t be ashamed. Be proactive. An examination of conscience isn’t intended to inspire guilt but rather conversion. Now’s the time to change. The good news is the Lord is near and no matter how far we’ve wandered, we don’t have to go very far to encounter God.

OT prophets said all we have to do is turn...yes, just turn, and find outstretched arms ready to enfold us.

That’s an excuse for celebration on this Sunday we call “Gaudate,” which means “rejoice.” That’s true for those who find the holidays lonely or depressing – consolation is offered to them. They are not abandoned. Even though money is short and need is great, we are protected in Christ according to St. Paul. And those who believe this are free to give their joy away.

*Does your life demonstrate belief in the nearness of the Lord?*

*“The crowd asked John, ‘What are we supposed to do?’ He told them to give their surplus money, food, and garments away; told the soldiers not to bully people or blackmail them...some thought him to be the Messiah but he told them the Spirit was a fire Who would ignite the life of the Kingdom within them. (Luke)”*

John the Baptist was a celebrity but did everything in his power to redirect the crowd’s attention from himself to Christ. Someone wrote several years ago John “knew he was a bit player in a cosmic story.” But like the crowd that pestered John, we sometimes fail to look past the messenger to the message.

How many of us get unglued when our favorite pastor leaves? Or when the realities of parish life don’t run the way we want them to? Or when a hero dies or disappears. Human beings will always disappoint, but God never does. If our joy is to be complete, we can’t fasten it to anything material. Rust and moths set in, but Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

*Who or what is the source of your joy?*

Fr. Glenn



## RELIGIOUS ED. CALENDAR



Class time 10:00am – 11:15am

**DECEMBER 22 AND DECEMBER 29  
NO CLASS CHRISTMAS BREAK**

*(Classes resume January 5)*

### STUDENTS GRADES K-5 PRESENT Lessons from the Christmas Crib



 **Sunday, December 22**  
at the end of the   
**11:30am Mass**

*Please join us in the social hall for  
refreshments after the presentation.*

*\*Parents of grades K-5 students are asked  
to drop off 2 dozen cookies in the social  
hall before Mass.*

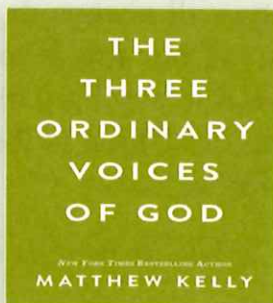
### **The Three Ordinary Voices of God**

*God Hasn't Stopped Speaking.*

*We've Stopped Listening.*

Learning to listen to the voice of God will change your life powerfully and wonderfully. *The Three Ordinary Voices of God* will help you discover how God is speaking to you today and how that will change all your tomorrows.

Please take your free copy in the gathering space.



## Family Ideas for Advent

*from Dynamic Catholic*

### **Did Someone Say Candy Cane ?**

The candy cane holds beautiful symbolism related to Jesus' birth and sacrifice on the cross. Shaped like a shepherd's crook, it signifies Jesus as the Good Shepherd who guides and protects his flock. The white color represents the purity and innocence of his birth, while the red stripes symbolize the blood shed on the cross for our redemption. When inverted, the candy cane forms the letter "J" for Jesus. Hang candy canes on your Christmas tree as a visual reminder of these meaningful messages. Then gather as a family and read the Nativity Story from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Luke's Gospel highlights the role of the shepherds and their encounter with the newborn Jesus!

### **Play with a Nativity Scene**

Harness the power of play to engage children in the story of Jesus' birth during the Advent season. Create a small nativity scene that is easy for your kids to play and interact with. Through this hands-on approach, children can develop a deeper understanding and connection to the nativity story, bringing it to life in their own unique way. Additionally, consider visiting a Live Nativity at a local church, where your family can witness a live enactment of the Christmas story. These interactive experiences help children grasp the significance of Jesus' birth in a tangible and memorable way.

### **Sing Happy Birthday to Jesus**

Celebrate the birth of Jesus by hosting a birthday party in his honor on Christmas Day! Gather your family and sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus. Indulge in a sweet treat, such as angel food cake, symbolizing the heavenly significance of the occasion. Through this simple yet meaningful tradition, you can instill in your family the joyous recognition of Jesus' central role in Christmas.



## 2024 ADVENT PENANCE SERVICES

Sunday, December 15 <sup>th</sup>	2:00 pm	Beloved Disciple Grove City
	5:00 pm	Immaculate Heart – Mercer
Wednesday, December 18 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 pm	Epiphany – Meadville
Thursday, December 19 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 pm	St. Joseph
Friday, December 20 <sup>th</sup>	6-7:00pm	Immaculate Heart – Mercer

### OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED

The office will be closed from Monday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> until Friday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> so that the staff may enjoy Christmas with their family and friends.

### All Souls Day Photos

We have the photos of loved ones from All Souls day. They can be picked up at the office by Friday, December 20<sup>th</sup> during office hours.

### Lottery Tickets

Lottery tickets will be available for sale before and after all Masses until December 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>. Tickets are \$5.00 each, and winners are based on the PA daily 3 digit nightly number. You will have 31 chances to win with every ticket. The payout is \$50 on weekdays and \$100 on Sundays. What a great stocking stuffer for Christmas. You may also purchase tickets from any ARS Member.

### Oplatki

Oplatki wafers are available in the parish office until Friday, December 20th during office hours. They are \$3 per pack of 4 wafers.



### Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Liturgical Ministry Sign-up

If you are a Lector, Eucharistic Minister, Usher, Greeter, or Altar Server and would like to serve for either Christmas Eve or Christmas Day Mass, sign-up sheets are available in the gathering space.

### Saint Mary (Paula) Di Rosa



Feast Day  
December 15<sup>th</sup>

The pounding on the barricaded door of the military hospital sent every heart thudding in terror. In the middle of the war in Brescia (Italy) in 1848, the wounded, sick, and those who cared for them knew what that pounding meant. The shouts from beyond the door came from soldiers, not obeying any command but their inner desire to destroy and plunder. Who could do anything to stop them? The only people here were some Sisters, the Handmaids of Charity, who devoted themselves to helping the sick. The doctors had not even wanted them there. The doctors wanted medical people who were secular and military, not nuns. And in the face of this new danger they were even more useless! Worse than useless -- because that Paula (as she was known) di Rosa was actually moving to open the door! When the door swung wide, the soldiers saw their way blocked with a great crucifix held by Paula di Rosa and two candles held by two of the six sisters who stood by her. Suddenly their frenzy to destroy disappeared, and full of shame before this display of courage and faith, they slunk back into the shadows.



## Becoming Catholic

(RCIA /OCIA)

This year we have 1 catechumen & four candidates. What is the difference between catechumens and candidates?

*Catechumens* are people who have **never** been baptized. They come to the Church seeking baptism, confirmation and Eucharist.

*Candidates* have many different journeys to the sacraments. Some may have been baptized Catholic and never received Eucharist or confirmation. Some may be baptized in another Christian denomination and have decided to join the Catholic Church with the sacraments of confirmation and Eucharist. Each catechumen or candidate must choose a sponsor who is fully initiated in the Catholic Church to be their companion on the journey to the sacraments.

**Parenting Pointers** In this season of "Peace" continue your peacemaking by making an effort to resolve a conflict you have with a family member, a neighbor, or a person with a different political view from yours. Who \_\_\_\_? Try it.

**A Family Perspective** Today's gospel encourages us to **SHARE!** This Christmas, resist the pressure to give token gifts. Instead, use those funds to provide **necessities** to the poor. If our impoverished brothers and sisters are not on our gift list, we've missed the true meaning of Christmas.

**Marriage Moment** What makes a marriage happy is often not so much how compatible you are, but how you deal with incompatibility. How are you and your beloved most different?



## CHRISTMAS GIFTS

There are Christmas gifts in the back sacrastry for all ministries of the parish, including: **Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Ushers, Altar Servers, Greeters, Catechists, Funeral Group, Environment, Music Ministry, Counters, & Food Pantry Volunteers.**

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**ALL ARE WELCOME.**

**BRUNCH & BUBBLY**  
JOIN US  
*St. Anthony Antonium*

SUNDAY 5TH JANUARY 9:30 AM	DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS SUNDAY DEC., 29TH	\$15 PER PERSON RESERVATIONS REQUIRED
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