Reflections from the Rector:

"Be still and know that I am God."

This verse from Psalm 41 is one of my favorites. We sometimes use it to shape the rhythm of our Centering Prayer gathering on Sunday and Friday mornings - quiet times set apart simply to sit in God's presence. To help us enter that stillness, we intentionally slow our breathing and close our eyes and repeat this verse together in this pattern:

Be still and know that I am God.
Be still and know that I am.
Be still and know.
Be still.
Be.

This practice helps to create a stillness within me, allowing me to stop my racing thoughts and lay aside my busyness so I can open my heart to God. Stillness and waiting do not always come naturally to me, but this practice helps me begin from a place of peace.

Advent invites us to find time to simply be with God. It is the season of holy waiting - waiting for the celebration of Christ's birth, and waiting for the day when Christ will come again in glory. It is a season that holds both quiet expectation and joyful hope.

How might you spend this sacred season of waiting? I encourage you to set aside moments of quiet when you can - to rest in Christ, even briefly. And yet, knowing how full our December days become, I know that finding even a few moments of quiet and rest may feel unrealistic. If that is the case for you, be encouraged that God does not only meet us in the stillness. God also meets us in the faithful activity, the preparation, the anticipation. This activity might include intentionally reaching out to those who are lonely, hurting, or in need during the holidays. Our waiting can be both peaceful and joyfully alive.

Here at St. Bart's, we have several opportunities to deepen our Advent journey together, including Deacon Pam's Advent book study, Kevin Sharpe's special Advent Centering Prayer workshop, and our Blue Christmas service for those who seek comfort and hope in a season that is not joyful for everyone.

You will also find our Christmas Eve schedule in this newsletter. May this Advent and Christmas season bring blessings to you and those you love, as we prepare to welcome God's greatest gift - Love, born into the world.

Peace, Joseph+



Rector

The Rev. Joseph Shippen

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Deacon

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Church Phone: (803) 279-4622

Website: www.saintbart.org



2025 Vestry

Iackie Raeth - - - - -Sr. Warden Ir. Warden Bobbie Quinn Zeny Vo Treasurer

Kathy Ives Secretary - - - - -John Doughty Charles Duchscher

Joyce Feenstra MaryAnne Good Barb McCall Mary Beth Pierucci

Lisa Russ

Scroll Editor: Janice Furman

Please submit articles by the 20th of the month by e-mail to: admin@saintbart.org

Any suggestions? Submit to same.

About St. Bartholomew's

We are called to be an inclusive community where all may encounter God's love. God strengthens, nourishes, and speak to us through scripture, tradition, and reason.

Our worship services are fully accessible in person and online, supplemented by a variety of other opportunities for spiritual growth and fellowship. We welcome the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as we seek to follow Christ.

With God's help, we seek to share the unconditional love of Jesus Christ through our outreach and social justice ministries.

All have a place here.

- St. Bartholomew's Vision Statement

Advent Book Study with Deacon Pam: "I Witness"

As we enter the season of Advent, St. Bart's will offer a new way to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. **Beginning Sunday, November 23rd**, Deacon Pam Crossley will lead a parish-wide **Advent Book Study** using the Forward Movement devotional "I Witness" by the Rev. Kate Moorehead.

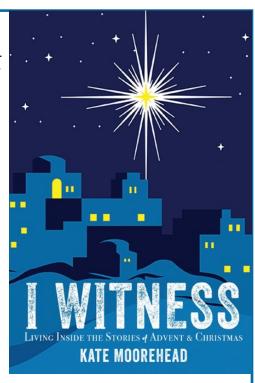
Pam writes:

"With grateful hearts, we tell out our story, prepare for Thanksgiving, and embark on our pilgrimage through Advent. As our guide on this journey, we have chosen the devotional booklet "I Witness". Come and See. We will walk this path together—sharing our experiences along the way."

Forward Movement describes "I Witness" this way:

"Many of us have heard the story of Jesus' birth, but have we lived inside it? Kate Moorehead invites us to enter the story of salvation eyes of its witnesses and encourages us to bear witness ourselves - both then and now - to the marvel and majesty of Christ our King."

Sundays at 9:00 a.m. - Adult Education Building All are welcome to join us on this Advent journey!



WONDERFUL WEDNESDAYS CONTINUE - DECEMBER 10 I 5:00 - 6:30 P.M.



Join us for our next *Wonderful Wednesday* on **Wednesday**, **December 10**, from **5:00 to 6:30 p.m.** in the Parish Hall. We'll begin with a **potluck dinner** and then enjoy a guided discussion led by Fr. Joseph.

Our featured film is *Silence (2016)*, directed by Martin Scorese and starring Andrew Garfield, Adam Driver, and Liam Neeson. Based on the acclaimed novel by Shūsaku Endō, this deeply moving story follows two Jesuit priests who travel to 17th-century Japan in search of their missing mentor and to share their faith during a time of brutal persecution.

Silence is a powerful meditation of faith, doubt, and the cost of discipleship. It invites us to wrestle with questions of suffering, conviction, and what it means to follow Christ when faith seems most difficult.

Please watch the film at home before we gather. For those who can't, we will show it in the Parish Hall at **3:00 p.m. on December 10**, before dinner and discussion. All are welcome - families, singles, & friends.

SPECIAL CENTERING PRAYER PRESENTATION WITH KEVIN SHARPE Friday, December 19 at 10:00 a.m. in St. Bart's Chapel

Our Centering Prayer group is pleased to welcome **Kevin Sharpe** for a special workshop and teaching session on contemplative prayer. Kevin brings deep experience in helping Christians grow in stillness, openness, and inner awareness.

This event is open to the entire parish—whether you've practiced Centering Prayer for years or have never tried it before. Please consider joining us for this gentle and spiritually nourishing morning.

Location: St. Bart's Chapel , 459 West Martintown Rd **Contact:** admin@saintbart.org I (803)279-4622





Ladies only Christmas Totluck Luncheon SATURDAY - DECEMBER 13TH @ NOON

IT'S THE HOLIDAYS, LET'S CELEBRATE!

Ladies Christmas Luncheon

LADIES, join us for a time to relax, laugh, eat, and fellowship before the BIG holiday rush.

Where: 104 Yaun Rd

North Augusta SC 29841

Questions?: Call Joyce Feenstra

RSVP: 803-507-4792



MEN'S MINISTR Y LAUNCH BREAKFAST

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20 • 9:00 AM

Free Southern Breakfast for All Men of the Parish

Come, Eat, and Explore Together

Men's Ministry Launch Breakfast SATURDAY - DECEMBER 20TH @ 9:00 a.m. - Parish Hall

All men of the parish are invited to a free breakfast as we begin exploring the formation of a men's ministry at St. Bart's.

We will welcome **Tom Martin**, a national leader in the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, who is traveling from Roswell, Georgia to cater our breakfast and share insights about men's ministry rooted in prayer, fellowship, and service. We will also hear a brief introduction to the brotherhood of St. Andrew as one possible model for building our own ministry here.

This is a **no-pressure**, **no-commitment** gathering — simply a time for men of the parish to enjoy a meal together and begin discerning what a men's group at St. Bart's could look like.



NATIVITY SHARE

Bring a nativity set for display, along a short note about its story or tradition

CHRISTMAS COOKIE SWAP

Bring 1 dozen homemade Christmas cookies to share

Nativity Share & Christmas Cookie Swap **December 14**

On Sunday, December 14, St. Bart's will hold our annual Nativity Share and Christmas Cookie Swap, a festive and faith-filled way to celebrate Advent together.

Nativity Share

Parishioners are invited to bring a nativity set of any size or style to display in the Parish Hall. Many of these sets carry wonderful stories—some passed down through families, others collected during travels, and still others crafted with special meaning. Please bring your nativity before the service and, if possible, include a brief written reflection about its history or significance.

Christmas Cookie Swap

Following the service, we will gather for a joyful cookie swap. Please bring a dozen homemade Christmas cookies to share. Seasonal favorites, treasured family recipes, and beautiful traditions are all encouraged!

We hope you will join us for this heartwarming celebration of community and the Advent Season.



THE CHRISTMAS STORY COMES ALIVE AT ST. BART'S

Christmas Eve · 4:00 p.m.

CALLING ALL SHEPHERDS, ANGELS, AND WISE ONES

This Christmas Eve at 4:00 p.m. we will have something very special - a Children's Christmas Pageant at St. Bart's! We're so excited to bring the Nativity story to life together. If your child or grandchild would like to take part - in any role, big or small - please let Fr. Joseph (priest@saintbart.org) know by November 10th. We'll keep it simple, joyful, and filled with the spirit of Christmas. Come be part of the fun - and help us celebrate the story of Jesus' birth in a way only our kids can!

PRACTICE TIMES: Pageant: 5:30 - 6:30 pm

Thursday - December 4th Tuesday - December 9th Tuesday - December 16th

Tuesday - December 23rd (if needed, time TBD)

CHRISTMAS CHOIR

This Christmas Eve, we're forming a special Christmas Choir for the 11 PM traditional service - and we'd love for you to be part of it!

♦ No experience required

♦ ♦ Singing one anthem + Christmas carols

◆ ◆ 2-3 rehearsals in December (dates TBD)

PRACTICE TIMES: CHOIR: 6:45 - 7:45 PM

Thursday - December 4 Tuesday - December 9 Tuesday - December 16

*Tuesday - December 23 - if needed time TBD

CHOIR: December 14th @ 11:00 PM (call time 10PM)

Special Music at Christmas Eve Service

Join us on **Wednesday, December 24th at 10:30 p.m.** for a beautiful Christmas Eve service at St.Bart's. This year we are delighted to present a special and festive musical offering:

- We welcome back the acclaimed quartet Upstate Strings, LLC, whose elegant string playing delighted us at our Good Friday service earlier this year. They will begin the service with a Christmas prelude and then accompany the service throughout with seasonal and sacred selections.
- ◆ Our congregation's newly formed **Christmas Choir** will offer an anthem a special setting of "Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel."
- Also returning, our reorganized **Bell Choir** has been diligently rehearsing for several months and will contribute a joyous instrumental piece to enhance the service.

We hope you'll come early (10:15 p.m. recommended) to settle in and enjoy the prelude by Upstate Strings. Invite your family and friends — this promises to be a memorable and meaningful way to celebrate the coming of Christ at midnight. For questions, contact us at admin@saintbart.org or (803) 279-4622.

EpiscoPals Lunch

The EpiscoPals is a monthly luncheon gathering for Adults 50+. It is a fun, relaxed time of fellowship and to eat good food! For some good food and a whole lot of talking, make plans to join us:

Our CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON will be held on WEDNESDAY (NOT Thursday), December 17th

at Outback Steakhouse, 2949 Washington Rd, Augusta at 11:30.

Sign up Sheets are in the Parish Hall. For more information contact Mike Osteen at 803-315-3549 Hope to see you there

The Health Ministry Screenings will be on the THIRD SUNDAY, December 21 from 9:30 to 11:30 am in the Parish Hall. During this time, you can have your blood pressure, blood glucose and weight checked, as well as ask general health questions.

For any questions, contact Robin Petry, 706-836-3027 or petrymail@yahoo.com.



PARTNERING WITH
CHRIST COMMUNITY HEALLTH

DONATE NEW, UNWRAPPED TOYS FOR INFANTS THROUGH AGE 12

DROP OFF BY DECEMBER 14

This Advent season, St. Bartholomew's is partnering with **Christ Community Health** to support their annual **Christmas Toy Drive**, bringing hope and joy to children in our community.

Christ Community Health is a faith-based, nonprofit healthcare organization in Augusta committed to providing high-quality, affordable medical care to all—especially to underserved and uninsured families. Their mission extends beyond clinical care, seeking to share Christ's love through compassionate service and holistic support. The Christmas Toy Drive is one of the many ways they walk alongside families, ensuring that children in need experience the warmth and wonder of Christmas.

We invite you to join us in supporting this meaningful ministry by donating **new**, **unwrapped toys for infants through age 12**. Please bring all donations to the church **no later than Sunday**, **December 14**. These gifts will be delivered to Christ Community Health and distributed to local families who need a little extra help this season.

For more information, please contact:

Dee McLane @ phone: 864-323-7552 or email: lmclane@wgu.edu

Thank you for helping us share generosity and light this Christmas season.



471 W. Martintown Rd., North Augusta, SC

Blue Christmas A Night of Hope and Healing THURSDAY - DECEMBER 18TH @ 7:00 p.m.

While much of the world celebrates the "most wonderful time of the year," many among us approach the holiday season carrying heavy burdens — grief, loneliness, stress, or uncertainty. St. Bart's will once again offer a **Blue Christmas Service** for anyone who finds this season difficult, and for all who long for a moment of honest reflection and quiet hope.

This gentle, candlelit service weaves together Scripture, prayer, and silence, reminding us that God meets us just as we are. As

Isaiah promises, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light."

Following the service, cookies and warm cider will be served in the Parish Hall.

Please invite friends, neighbors, or loved ones who may find comfort in this special service. in this special service.

STEWARDSHIP AT WORK

""Give what you have. To someone, it may be better than you dare to think" Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Year to Date receipts through October, 2025:

	OPERATING FUND		
	Actual	Need	Difference
Pledge	\$ 207,721.51	\$ 213,476.56	\$ - 5,755.05
Other	\$ 23,001.99	\$ 13,032.76	\$ 9,969.23
TOTAL	\$ 230,723.50	\$ 226,509.32	\$ 4,214.18

If you are a member who has not pledged, please consider doing so. Just contact the church office, get a pledge card, and drop it in the offering plate. Pledges are welcome at any time during the year.



A Wish and a Prayer

When you wish upon a birthday candle, God hears it as a prayer. These dreams of your heart ascend to His heart, where they ignite in hope. Hope for happy days ahead, for making more good memories. Hope for loved ones coming together, sharing smiles and stories and hugs. For reasons to celebrate – big and small – and for joy upon joy. Each candle, like each

year of your life, represents God's faithful care for you. He is always working things together for your good, bringing you more grace, making your hopes and dreams come true.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2 Candace Waters
2 Joseph Shippen
4 Zeny Vo
5 Sandy Zeller
11 Sallie Dubay
2 Candace Waters
18 Maddison Vickers
25 Natalie Black
25 Bill Raeth
29 Emily Waddell
30 Bart Black



<u>DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES</u>

16 David & Lil Miller

17 Hinton & Ginger Wells



We invite you to purchase altar flowers in *Loving Memory of* or in *Thanksgiving of*, by signing up for a Sunday in the Flower Book, located in the Narthex. or by contacting *Janice at admin@saintbart.org*. The cost is \$45 and may be paid by cash or check, earmarked "altar flowers" in the Sunday collection, or by text-to-give: Text SAINTBART Flowers \$45 to 73256 using your text messaging. Standard rates do apply.

Pastoral Emergencies

All pastoral concerns including:

hospitalizations, illnesses, deaths, child concerns, or relationship issues may go directly to Father Joseph via his secured email at <u>priest@saintbart.org</u> or by phone at 803-279-4622.

All concerns will be held in the strictest of confidence.



SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

9:00 A.M. Sunday School 10:00 A.M. Holy Eucharist Rite II 10:00 A.M. Children's Church 10:00 A.M. Live Streaming to Facebook & YouTube 11:00 A.M. Coffee Hour in Parish Hall





St. Bart's Christmas Party

SATURDAY - DECEMBER 27TH • 4:00-7:00 p.m. • Parish Hall

Mark your calendars and get ready to celebrate!

Our cherished St. Bart's Christmas Party returns on Saturday, December 27th from 4:00–7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. This event, generously hosted each year by Jon Posey and Charles Duchscher, is one of the great joys of our parish life. Jon and Charles always create an atmosphere full of warmth, beauty, hospitality, and holiday cheer.

What makes this gathering truly special is that it's held **in the actual Christmas Season**—a welcome chance to celebrate the joy of Christmastide with your parish family after the rush of Advent. Expect festive refreshments, great company, and the unmistakable joy of celebrating Christmas together.

Everyone is invited—bring a friend!

St. Thaddeus Advent Quiet Day

Saturday • December 6th • 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

St Bartholomew's and others are invited to an Advent Quiet Day at St Thaddeus Episcopal Church on Saturday, Dec 6 hosted by The St. Thaddeus Daughters of the King (DOK). The Reverend Deacon Beth Barkau will lead us, exploring the theme, "Advent, Behold!" Beth is a retired ordained Deacon in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). We'll gather in the Chapel of the Holy Apostles, 125 Pendleton St, SW, Aiken, 29801, from 9:00- 12:30. There is no cost to attend. Light refreshments will be available and we'll conclude before lunch. You can register by contacting the Church Office at 803-648-5497. All are welcome (men, too!)

Holiday House Market Thank-You & Next Steps

Thank you to everyone who helped make the **Holiday House Market** such a joyful and successful event! We are grateful for all who cooked, crafted, served, shopped, and supported this beloved St. Bart's tradition.

The Crafters for Christ, who make the Holiday House possible each year, are now preparing their next act of

ministry. They will be donating the remaining handmade **stuffed animals** to **North Augusta Public Services**, including law enforcement, fire safety, and emergency responders. These animals will be used to bring comfort to children and others in stressful situations.

Before they are delivered, the animals will be placed in the pews for the next few weeks so that each of us may **pray over them** and the people who will receive them. You will see them in the pews beginning **this Sunday**.

This outreach also honors **Carol Osteen** and **Susan Meloan**, two original members of Crafters for Christ who were recognized at this year's Holiday House. One of the officers receiving these comfort animals is Carol's niece—a beautiful reminder of how our ministry extends into the community we serve.

Christmas Flowers & Music

Donations for Christmas Flowers and Music can be made "in thanksgiving or memory of" a loved one. Envelopes are available in the pews and in the narthex and should be returned to the collection plate, no later than **Sunday, December 14th**. You may also remit by online giving earmarked "Christmas" and then email your request to:

admin@saintbart.org.



Endowment Campaign Update: Let's Keep Growing!

This spring, we relaunched the St. Bartholomew's Endowment Fund—an expression of faith in the future God is shaping among us. Since then, your generosity has been inspiring. As of November, our parish family has given \$34,050 to the Endowment. Thanks to the anonymous matching challenge, every dollar has been doubled, bringing our current campaign total to \$68,100. Thank you!

Our goal is to raise \$200,000 to strengthen the long-term financial foundation of our church—so that we can respond boldly to opportunities, support ministries as they grow, and care faithfully for our buildings and grounds.

We originally planned to complete the campaign at the end of this year, and we continue to warmly invite year-end gifts. At the same time, several parishioners have shared that—for tax or financial planning reasons—they are able to give **early in the new year** instead. To support that, the matching opportunity will now **remain available into early 2026**.

This means:

If you are ready to give now, your gift makes a difference immediately.

If you need to wait until after January 1, your gift will still be doubled!

Endowment gifts are invested—not spent—to support St. Bartholomew's for generations to come. These are gifts that say: "We believe in the future of this place."

You can give by check with "Endowment" in the memo line, or contact the office to talk about giving stock or including the Endowment in your estate plans.

Thank you for your hope, your generosity, and your partnership in God's work.

Let's keep growing—together.





Tell Out My Soul THERE IS STILL TIME TO MAKE YOUR PLEDGE

This year's theme, *Tell Out My Soul*, invites each of us to share the story of God's goodness in our lives — through our words, our actions, our love, and our joy. We invite you to prayerfully consider how you can support the mission and ministry of St. Bart's in the year ahead. If you have not yet had a chance to submit a pledge, please do so as soon as possible. Pledge cards can be found on the table in the Narthex or you can call or email the church office at admin@saintbart.org, (803) 279-4622. Together, let us *tell out our souls* in gratitude and generosity!

Loose Plate Offerings collected on the **Third Sunday** of each month (as well as designated checks) will go to the Rector's Discretionary Fund

Donations to the Rector's Discretionary Fund are used to support individuals and families in need. Assistance is kept confidential.

