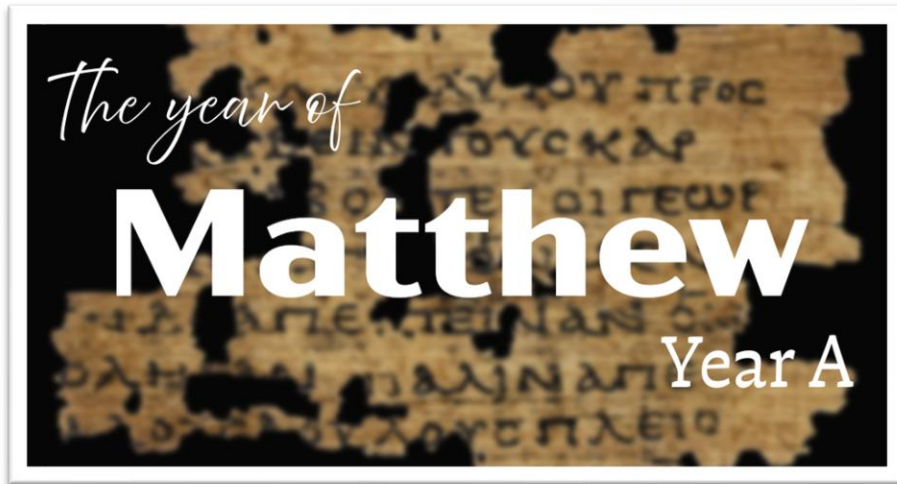


December 2025

The Good News

A Newsletter of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Louisville, Kentucky



Wherever we are, this is how we love God and God's People

From the Rector's Study

Fr. Andrew, Rector

Beloved,

Let us not look back with nostalgia, nor ahead with fear, but around with awareness. I learned this blessing years ago from Fr. Ralph Carskeddon, an old friend and mentor, when he was serving as interim dean of St. Mark's Cathedral in Seattle, where I worshipped weekly before going off to seminary. I can hardly believe it was twenty years ago.

That blessing was especially poignant for the cathedral community at the time. They were doing the hard inner work of reorganizing and healing after a painful pastoral transition. People were unsure, tender, and trying their best to keep faith in the present moment. As we begin a new liturgical year—Year A, the Matthean year—I hear echoes of that same blessing in the Gospel of Matthew.

Matthew's Gospel was written for a community of Greek-speaking Jewish

believers who needed to understand how Jesus fulfilled the hopes and promises of their ancestors. Matthew anchors Jesus firmly in Hebrew lineage, quotes the Hebrew Scriptures extensively, and draws deep parallels between Moses and Jesus to show that the Messiah they longed for had come. In a time when Matthew's audience lived with both nostalgia for their past and uncertainty about their future, Jesus reassures them that he has not come to abolish their tradition but to fulfill it.

As we begin reading Matthew again, I invite you to imagine the lives of those first hearers. What was it like to flee one's homeland and make a life in a foreign place? What was it like for children to grow up more fluent in Greek than in their parents' mother tongue? What did it feel like to cling to Jewish identity while also embracing a new way of understanding the law of Moses? How did they come to see Jesus as the Messiah while living as a minority people in a vast empire?

Matthew speaks powerfully to such communities—and I believe their questions resonate with our lives more than we might expect.

Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, we all seek renewal. The work of

bringing the kingdom of heaven close—right here on earth—is holy and never easy. As we begin this new Christian year, how might you stay awake to the present moment, faithful in the world as it is, and open to a renewed sense of purpose, understanding, and being?

May this season draw us not backward or forward, but deeply into God's presence here and now.

With Love,
Fr. Andrew



From the Deacon

Pete Womack – Deacon

With the holidays upon us and being distracted by parties, decorating, and shopping, I wanted to pass on an experience I had with a phishing email. Phishing is a form of communication tied to fraud, where someone uses some basic knowledge about you along with a convincing script to get you to send them money in some form. Most often it is done through email but can also be done by a random phone call. The scammer will ask for money and promise reimbursement, but minutes after you send them money, it is gone and so

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are they. You may be out hundreds or thousands of dollars. I decided to play along with a recent phishing email I received to see how they were operating. This was the first email:

“Hello. Do you have some time. I have a request I need you to handle discreetly. I am currently busy, no calls so just reply my email.

Fr. Andrew Shirota Rector
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
4700 Lowe Road Louisville, Kentucky
40220

Sent from Mymail”

This looks legitimate because the name and church address are correct. But, my first clues were that I was to only reply by email, that the email address was not one that Fr. Andrew uses, and the tag at the bottom saying that it was sent by Mymail. Mymail is a Russia-based email account manager for mobile devices and Fr. Andrew doesn't use it. I replied to this email, and received the next email within 5 minutes:

“Okay!! Please here's what I want you to do for me because I am going to be busy all through today. I have been working on incentives, and I have aimed to surprise some of our diligent staff with gift cards

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this week. This should be confidential until they all have the gift cards, as it's a surprise, and you will keep one for yourself, too. Can you get this done today?”

There's an element of urgency (do it today), and an element of secrecy (confidential) that were more clues that this was a scam. These are essential elements to draw you in and get you invested in carrying out the request. I replied that I could get the cards, and received this email a little later:

“Here's is information on what I need you to do for me. I need 6qty of Macy's, Sephora or Foot locker gift cards \$200 value on each (total \$1200). You should get them at any local store around you. After you get them Scratch off the seal on the claim code and take a clear pictures of each cards front and back having them removed from the packs. Send to me here so I can forward them to each respective staffs via their emails. Please keep the physical cards and receipt for reference and reimbursement purpose. I'll make your reimbursement available to you by Friday. Bring the physical cards along when you're coming for your reimbursement. God bless.”

There are red flags here, and the scam is revealed. There are several grammatical mistakes that are a tip-off. Gift cards are often requested because they are easy ways to transfer money from person to person. Also, why ask for six cards for two staff members? In this case, I was asked to take a picture of the front (to reveal the store), and most importantly, the back with the redemption code exposed. Had I done this, those codes would have been entered into the scammer's online store accounts within minutes of receiving them, and the cards would become worthless. I would have handed over \$1200 to the scammer with no way of getting it back. Not every phishing email will look just like this one, but the elements are the same: familiar name and details, authority, secrecy, urgency, unusual requests, and a promise of a future reimbursement. So, pay attention to your emails and phone calls. Cut off communication with the person who appears to be sending you email or is calling you so that you can verify the request directly using known and published contact information. Don't be embarrassed by making separate contact to verify what is being asked of you. Stay safe this holiday season.



From the Vestry

George Busch – Buildings & Grounds

My last 3 years on the vestry is drawing to a close. It has been a privilege for me to serve on the vestry with all the church members that have been on the vestry with me. A lot has been accomplished at St Paul's in the last 3 years, some big projects and many small ones. I am always amazed how much is done around our small church and how much everyone loves this church, we are truly a church "FAMILY" in every sense of the word, and I feel very blessed to be part of it.

We have had some members of the parish step up and volunteer to help with the upkeep of our beautiful church and grounds. For this I am very grateful because it makes work easier and helps to build new friendships and camaraderie. We need some new blood on the vestry to learn the inner workings of our building and grounds; it's really not a terrible amount to learn but is very rewarding to be a part of keeping St. Paul's operating smoothly. I feel that St. Paul's is my safe place as well as a place for me to hide and do what I love to do, fix Stuff.

Over the years I have made so many friends because of being involved and the satisfaction of being able to help and be

needed is great. I don't plan to stop doing what I do around church because I love it, but you never know what's around the corner and other people need to know what's going on which I want to share with them. I'm 72 yrs. old so you never know. I have to laugh when I remember several years back when I was at Kroger's with someone and it was Friday when seniors got a discount. We were standing in a checkout line when this person remarked, "look at all these old people and how slow they are, well it's OK I guess, you know they're on borrowed time".

Well, I don't think of myself as old, at least in my mind that is. I have my aches and pains but I'm surely not ready for an easy chair and I want to continue to be useful wherever I can. I thank God every day for the gifts he gave me and the opportunities to use them.



From the Organist - Choirmaster

David Paul Gibson – Organist - Choirmaster

Of all the months of the year there is not a month one half so welcome to the young, or so full of happy associations, as the last month of the year.” —Charles Dickens
I would add “not just for the young.”
There is something very special about December, Christmas, and New Year’s Eve, and all the wonderful memories they bring about. Our time as children with our parents, grandparents, and siblings, and then that special time with our own children, grandchildren, and for some, great-grandchildren. Adding to those memories, I would add the many, many individuals I have had the honor of conducting as we have sung the Saint-Saëns CHRISTMAS ORATORIO or Handel’s MESSIAH (many times!), countless cantatas, and fifty-plus years of Christmas Eve services. So many people, so much music, and so many wonderful memories.

December 2025 should be no different. We will be singing familiar Advent and then Christmas music in mass. Our choir and schola are working to prepare the Alfred Burt Carols for the Christmas Eve mass, and Frank Kirk, Jr. and I have

chosen lovely traditional organ selections for the month. Speaking of the Alfred Burt Carols, if you are attending the 10:00pm Christmas Eve Mass, the choir will begin singing the Carols at 9:30pm. Alfred Burt was an American jazz musician who carried on a family tradition of writing a new carol each year to give as gifts to friends and family. They have since become a staple of choral music and I believe you will enjoy the six I have selected for the occasion. For those of you attending the 5:00pm service, Frank and I will be presenting music at the organ and piano beginning at 4:30pm.

J.M. Barrie tells us that “God gave us memory so that we might have roses in December.” May all of your December memories be comforting and may this magical month bring you the blessings of the season.

David Paul Gibson



From the Preschool

Erin Dykes - Director

Happy Holiday Season, St. Paul's Families, November was a nice month of recovery from the busy-ness and excitement that comes with our “All About the Boo!” Halloween festivities. We are thankful for the large group of parent volunteers and St. Paul's church members that helped to hand out treats to our kiddos as they paraded through the building.

While we try to be mindful of the Thanksgiving holiday and not rush through the season of thanks, our minds are already thinking forward to December and Christmas. We have a very short time to prepare for all the magic that we make in the Preschool. When we return from Thanksgiving break, our poinsettia order is being delivered by Goodwin's Greenhouse and we are having our annual Polar Express events as well. What a way to ring in December!

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Poinsettia Fundraiser. Preschool and Parish together combined their efforts to sell 191 plants! I can't wait to see them all delivered in the parish hall. It is a striking sight to see all those vibrant plants

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together while we are waiting for them to be picked up.

Mrs. Pam and our students are already hard at work practicing songs for our annual Christmas Concerts. We've been singing Christmas songs since before Halloween! We are hosting our concerts on Thursday, December 18th and Friday, December 19th at approximately 9:20 AM. Please feel free to join us. Families are invited to watch their children dress in adorable costumes and perform some preschool holiday favorites. We are excited that Mr. David Paul Gibson and Mr. Frank Kirk have agreed, once again, to join us and provide the piano/organ

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prelude/postlude. Following the concerts we'll be hosting receptions in the parish hall, complete with cookies, milk, and the opportunity to visit Santa and Mrs. Claus. We enjoy this festive sendoff to Christmas Break every year. The children and their families are always full of holiday cheer, and then we all have an opportunity to rest and recharge before we return in January.

Merry Christmas to all of you, and we will see you when we return in 2026!

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Pray, Learn, Serve, and Rejoice at St. Paul's

We Pray

Pray for All

During this challenging time, please be intentional about setting a time to pray. Pray for those on the prayer list. (pg. 14)



We Learn

Ecclesiastical Bits & Bytes

Technology and Theology with Fr. Andrew

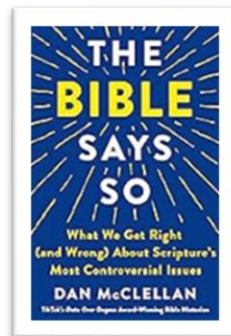
Are you feeling intimidated with your computer, tablet, and smartphones? Are you frustrated with virtual meetings? Greetings, favored one. Do not be afraid for the Lord is with us. Contact the office to set up an appointment.



Adult Formation

The Bible Says So!

No registration is required; we will meet at 9:00 AM – 10:15 AM each Sunday morning in the first-floor conference room each Sunday. Your favorite bookstore or Amazon is the place to find this book.



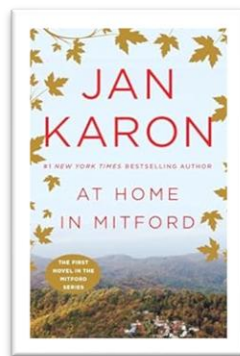
Wednesday Book Club

At Home in Mitford, by Jan Karon

11:00 AM - 12:30 PM Conference Room

Enter the world of Mitford, and you won't want to leave.

It's easy to feel at home in Mitford. In these high, green hills, the air is pure, the village is charming, and the people are generally lovable.



Yet, Father Tim, the bachelor rector, wants something more. Enter a dog the size of a sofa who moves in and won't go away. Add an attractive neighbor who begins wearing a path through the hedge. Now, stir in a lovable but unloved boy, a mystifying jewel theft, and a secret that's sixty years old.

Suddenly, Father Tim gets more than he bargained for. And readers get a rich, provincial comedy in which mysteries and miracles abound.

We Serve

Calvary Episcopal Church Food Pantry

Please join us at St. Paul's Episcopal Church each Sunday from 9 am – 12 pm for the Sunday Service food collection.

All food is counted and delivered to Calvary on Thursday morning after collection. If you would like to volunteer to help with driving and delivery, contact Ray Brown or David Dawkins.

Current Total: 179,587 items donated.

Please be a part of this amazing ministry by bringing items to the Sunday “SERVICE” at St. Paul's or sending in your monetary donation!


St. Paul's parish has generously donated over \$18,748.35 to the Calvary Food pantry since June 2020. Make checks payable to St. Paul's.

We Rejoice

Website

Communication is the key to a successful ministry. Be sure to check out the website to keep up to date on church activities.





Christmas Services

2025

Wednesday, December 24th

Christmas Eve Vigil


5:30 PM Worship & Holy Eucharist (Music Prelude 5:00 PM)

10:30 PM Midnight Mass (Music Prelude 10:00 PM)

Thursday, December 25th

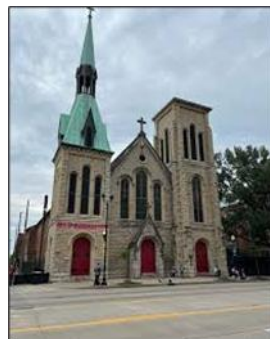
Christmas Day

9:00 AM Worship with Holy Eucharist



ROOM IN THE INN

It is time to renew our commitment to **ROOM IN THE INN (RITI)** at the Cathedral this winter. RITI is an emergency shelter program for women and women with children at Christ Church Cathedral. St. Paul's was an important part in the success of the first year of this ministry. We had a small but very determined group of volunteers last winter. It would be great to have more volunteers to be able to put together two dedicated teams that could rotate so St. Paul's could provide coverage once a week.



A team consists of a minimum of six, preferably eight people, not including the people from the parish who help by providing food, snacks, and supplies. The team is divided into three shifts: greeting and dinner, overnight, breakfast and clean-up. The night starts at 4:30 pm and ends at 6:30 am. Each shift, including the overnight, must have at least one female.

If you have questions about last years' experience, please talk to Cindy Miner, Joseph Caminiti, Kirsten Caminiti, or me. If you would like to help this year in any capacity, please let me know.

Kathy Dawkins

Prayers and Thanksgivings

Please contact the office to include names on the prayer list by the 15th of each month. Names will be listed for 30 days (short term prayers) or if requested 3 months (long term prayers). Fr. Andrew and the weekday prayer group prays for each person by name every day.

Healing, Comfort, Relief, Protection, and Hope

Erin Dykes, Mark Nief (Linda Snyder's Brother), Family of Jo Stuebe, Joanne & Harry Kutz, Susan Hamilton, Donald & Mary Greenlee, Sharon Nelson, Debrah Self (Sister of Carol Schusterman), Diana Motsch, Dena Rogers, Rebecca Rupp (Friends of Peggy Pryse), Judy (Friend of Kitty Riney), Donna Pigram, Mark Fischer (Husband of Robyn Fischer), Lance Nelson, Dale Miner, Pat Weaver (Sister of Dale Miner), Angelina & Stephanie, Vicki & Gary Kurk, Barlow Brooks (Brother of Bill Brooks), Barbara & Alan Johnson, Susan Johnson, Lisa Johnson, Milton (Friends & Family of Barbara & Alan Johnson), Pam Dickmann, Jim Latimer, Nancy Northrop, Family of John & Wanda Wiegand, Sheri Hamilton & Megan Pazarro (Friends of Betty Waddell), Rick Robbins, Lauren Marshall & Linda Milholen (Friends & family of Pam Dickmann), Shelby (Granddaughter of Margaret Dickinson), Yoshi & Matthew (Friends of Fr. Andrew), Ken, Mary Jane & Alan (Friends of Nancy Skidmore), Steve & Mary Combs, (Friends of Cindy Miner), Jeannie & Tony Guffy (Parents of Cheryl Young), Caleb Dykes (Son of Erin Dykes), Andy Lowe (Friend of Donna & Al Smith), Philip & Cheryl (Brother of Fr. Roger), Maureen & Joe Solan (Parents of Jason Solan)

Serving in the Military

2nd Lt. Kyle Sears (Grandson of Arlene Buckner), Christopher Neal (Son-in-law of Monica Bell), Anthony Polio (Grandson Wanda Wiegand), John Phipps (Nephew of Ray Keller), Matt Hartmann, Luke Hartlage (Son of Linda Hartlage, preschool teacher), Jennifer & Joe Venghaus, Lt. Erin Jones (Niece of Rex Jones), Jack Holzknecht (Grandson of Joan Holzknecht)

Homebound

Betty Reed, Mary Ellen Pinto, Lorna Larson, Donna Coliz, Jane Delgado-Shadid, James & Mae Fleming, Andy & Pam Phillips

Anniversaries

Tony & Lillian Conklin (12/30)

Birthdays

Grace Phillips (12/4), Becky Moulton (12/4), Erin Carter (12/9), Fr. Roger Walker (12/10), Marsha Serdenis (12/16), Ruth Ellen Flint (12/17), Carol Schusterman (12/19)

Leadership

Senior Class ('26)

Kathy Dawkins	Senior Warden
George Busch	Buildings and Grounds
Jason Solan	Formation

Middler Class ('27)

Suzie Aebersold	Junior Warden
Meg Mrozowski	Worship
Tom Yurt	Stewardship

Junior Class ('28)

Connie Sublett	Secretary
Ruth Ellen Flint	Outreach
Cheryl Young	Fellowship
DMLO Firm	Treasurer/Accountant

Robyn Fischer	Parish Administrator
David Paul Gibson	Organist - Choir Master
Erin Dykes	Director of Preschool

The Rev. Pete Womack	Deacon
The Rev. Roger Walker	Priest Associate
The Rev. Andrew Shirota	Rector
The Rt. Rev. Terry White	Bishop of Kentucky

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QR Code to Church Website	



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Louisville, KY 40220

Return Service Requested