



Week of December 6—December 12, 2020

CASTING OUR NET

ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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You may give online by visiting our website or by texting SSNH to 73256 (REALM)

Dear St. Stephen's Community,

In this year's Advent Word series ([#adventword; adventword.org](https://www.adventword.org)), the meditation word for December 4 stopped me in my tracks. It was "fellowship" with the accompanying photo showing a group of people close to another around a campfire. Somedays, I post a photograph of my own in response to the meditation but that day, my heart ached because I have no recent photographs of humans engaged in fellowship with the exception of screen shots of our Zoom gatherings. Those didn't quite fit the bill.

The image that came to my mind was that of Yellow Sulfur butterflies "puddling" at our water feature in the backyard. It is an every summer phenomenon, one that I take so for granted, I had to go back to the summer of 2017 to get a picture. They are simply beautiful, together, and they give me hope.



On Dec. 20, we will have another sign of hope. After a detailed pastoral conversation with Bishop Jennifer regarding Christmas Communion, I will hold a brief outdoor bread-only communion service at 11:30 AM (the online Advent Candle Lighting service will still take place at 11 AM as scheduled). This will be a brief outdoor service limited to five units of attendees with first invitations going to those who have been unable to make the online services. After the conclusion of this service, other people are invited to come in 5 unit increments on the quarter hour (Noon, 12:15, 12:30, 12:45, and 1 PM) to say the Lord's Prayer, receive Holy Communion and receive a Christmas blessing. People are asked to stay in their cars or golf carts until I call them up to receive communion. Sign up for a time slot is via Google Sheets (click [here](#) to add your name and number of persons in your vehicle) or people can call the parish office on Monday or Wednesday to get a time. In the event of bad weather, we will reschedule for Dec. 27th, St. Stephen's Feastday. If you have questions about how this will work, please call me.

Stay safe!

God's peace,

Beth+



LITURGICAL CALENDAR

December 13, 2020 *Third Sunday of Advent*

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Psalms 126

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 20, 2020 *Fourth Sunday of Advent*

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

December 27, 2020

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Psalms 147

Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7

John 1:1-18



We ask for Continued Prayers:

The church, its members, and its mission; The nation and all in authority; The welfare of the world; Charles, Sally & Scott Huck; Hope; Sheila, Greg, & Ivy; Lori L.; Lori E.; Rachel, Karen, & Trevor; Eli Haddix; Health Care Personnel; Teachers & therapists working closely with special needs students; For all faculty & staff; Those suffering from the effects of COVID; The knowledge to make the right decisions that will keep our communities safe

And for those serving in the Military:

EB; Alex; Caitlyn; Brady; Jackson; All who serve

And for Safety in Travel for:

All truck drivers and delivery persons

Those who have died:

Delores Layer; Those who have died from COVID 19; Those who have died from violence

For those who celebrate Birthdays in Dec:

December 6 – Vicki Harris

December 6 – Mark Sellars

December 7 – Mike Staubitz

December 18 – Sara Pfister

December 25 – David McFarland

December 28 – Shane Harris

For those who celebrate Anniversaries in Dec:

December 16 – Robin & Rita Davis

December 30 – Bish & Liz Mumford

And for those serving in our Diocese,

including Bishop Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows; our companion Diocese Brasillia, their Bishop Mauricio, and the people and Diocese of Haiti and St. Andre's in Mithon

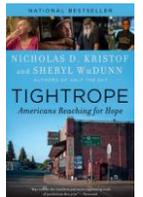
Blessings:

Technology that keeps us connected; Our recent cool, but sunny days; Birthdays of Mark Sellars, Vicki Harris, & Mike Staubitz; For beautiful Christmas decorations and lights.

Diocesan Book Study **Tightrope: Americans Clinging to Hope**

Bishop Jennifer leads a diocesan book study of **Tightrope: Americans Reaching for Hope by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn**. The best-selling book examines "the crisis in working-class America while focusing on solutions to mend a half century of governmental failure."

Discussion questions will be posted on Sunday, Dec. 13 at 1 p.m. Eastern/noon Central, Bishop Jennifer will host Zoom conversations about the book's various themes.



THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS,
PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS
STRAIGHT.
-MARK 1:3 KJV