



St. David's  
Episcopal Church  
Southfield

**Staying in Touch**

**Connections**

**December 2021**

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**2022—Our year of gratitude**

A refurbished church, a burgeoning food pantry, and new hybrid worship, boy what one year can bring!

While we have all been challenged in new, exciting, and scary ways over the last year, I'm so proud of how our church family has stayed committed to Christ and to one another.

And at this time of year, which is traditionally reflective of the months that have passed, we gather to worship, to say thanks, and in a new twist look to make the year ahead a year of gratitude.

By now you may have heard that we are going to focus on gratitude in 2022. We have acquired a number of gratitude bracelets and are challenging one another to go 21 days in a row without complaining. That's right, and if and when we do complain, we're going to take that as an opportunity to be thankful.

Using the bracelets, put it on your right wrist, or in your right pocket if you don't wear jewelry, and if you complain, move it to your left wrist or pocket. Your penalty for complaining, is that you have to say two gratitudes, or things for which you are thankful.

I realize this sounds hokey. But becoming more thankful is not.

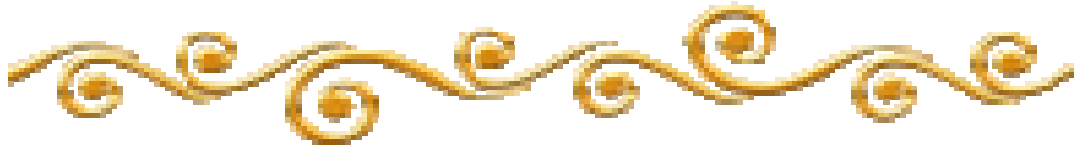
Becoming more aware of the blessings that are around us is not. Increasing our awareness of the people, possessions, and creation all around us that are truly gifts, is not hokey at all.

You will notice a special offering envelope in this mailing that you can use to finish up your pledge, and perhaps add a little more for those who won't be able to finish their pledge this year. After all, giving is a great way to give thanks, to be grateful.

One thing is for sure, I am truly grateful for you, my parish family. You have helped bring me and my family through a challenging year, you have helped me more than you'll ever know, to return again and again to Jesus and the message of the gospel, and the promises God makes to care for us, provide for us, and point us in the right direction. I can't wait to begin the new year with you!

Merry Christmas, Father Chris





## Christmas at St. David's

### Friday, December 24

5:00 pm Christmas Eve Children's Service and Nativity Pageant  
(see page 4 for details)

### Friday, December 24

9:30 pm Choral Concert

### Friday, December 24

10:00 pm Christmas Eve Service

### Saturday, December 25

10:00 am Christmas Eucharist

### Saturday, December 25

11:00 am–2:00 pm All Ages Christmas Community Feast

### Sunday, December 26

11:30 am Christmas Caroling at St. Anne's Mead



### December 12– Cookie Walk

It is almost time for the Annual St. David's Cookie Walk! On December 12, following the 10 am service, you will have the opportunity to purchase a container of homemade Christmas cookies! You will pay for your container and select the cookies you want. Then enjoy! If you would like to bake cookies for the event, please email [Jernst1998@gmail.com](mailto:Jernst1998@gmail.com) and let her know what kind(s) and how many you can make. You will bring them to church on December 12 and leave them in the Fellowship Hall. We will get them displayed for sale.

### December 19- Crossroads Soup Kitchen

St. David's will be serving dinner at Crossroads on Sunday December 19. Please contact Len Sackett at [leonard123dranoel@gmail.com](mailto:leonard123dranoel@gmail.com) if you would like to join. Please arrive at Crossroads by 10:15 am and plan on being there until about 3:30 pm.

### December 25 St. David's Christmas Day Feast

*All Are Invited to Our Christmas Feast.* St. David's is hosting a Christmas Banquet on Christmas Day, Saturday, December 25 for anyone who would like to come.

**Volunteers are needed!** We can use volunteers to devote about two hours on that day and help leading up to this festive event. If you want to share God's love in this way, please add your name to the sign-up sheet in the atrium, or speak with Fr. Steve Bancroft.

## Meet Stacey Heinonen

by John Hawkes

Stacey Heinonen is a cradle Episcopalian and has attended St. David's for about two years now. She was recently elected to serve on our vestry with her term beginning in 2022 and has also become a member of the Altar Guild. Stacey admitted that St. David's feels like an extension of her family.

"From the moment I came here, everyone was so welcoming, kind and helpful,"

Stacey said. "People are super understanding and parishioners are so good at reaching out. I'm excited about the opportunities for involvement within the community."

Stacey grew up in Rochester Hills and attended Episcopal churches such as St. Philips in Rochester and St. Andrew's in Waterford. She is a University of Michigan graduate and previously lived in Howell for 24 years. Stacey attended St. Paul's in Brighton where she was on the vestry and served as an Altar Guild member.

Stacey currently lives in Berkley and works as an Attorney for the Gordon Rees law firm, a



nationwide company that recently opened an office in Detroit. She specializes in appeals in civil litigation and personal injury cases. Stacey has been married for two years to Jim Gross who is also a personal injury Attorney. Both once worked at the Mike Morse law firm in Southfield. "Sometimes we went against each other in litigation," Stacey began. "He once told me that since I kept beating him, he had to marry me."

Stacey has three sons: Tyler, who is in his first year of training at Camp Geiger, a section of the Marine Corps Base Lejeune in Jacksonville, North Carolina; Jack, who is in his senior year of Michigan International Prep School, an online program accredited by the state; and 9-year-old Bryce.

In her spare time, Stacey enjoys doing crossword puzzles, reading and learning the art of Calligraphy. Her favorite vacation destination is southwest Florida.

We welcome Stacey Heinonen to St. David's.

## A Note from Seminarian Donna Lockhart

I am blessed to share the news of my ordination to the Transitional Diaconate. The ordination is on December 18, 2021, at 11:00 am, at the Cathedral of St. Paul, Detroit. Being ordained at the same time are three of my fellow travelers; Eric Braun, Katherine Beck-Ei, and Tom Ferguson.

In reflecting on the road that has led me to this point, I am humbled by the grace and love of God. Through this journey, the tears, the joy, the fear, and the God of it all, I am finding myself being transformed into a person I think I once knew, once upon a time.

I believe our life experiences are not ours alone, everyone around us is affected by what the other goes through. None of us can be fully healed if even one of our siblings is suffering and it is living

into loving our neighbors as ourselves that we live into our calling as Christians—this is life as the Body of Christ, living and breathing amongst us. It is in complete gratitude of this ongoing transformation and the doors to continued healing that have been opened to me, that I step actively into my call. People say, "Create the world you want to live in." I want to create a world where yesterday's traumas don't dictate our present day and where our present day is one that is a foundation for a brave new tomorrow. I believe we can build a society where all people, regardless of race, creed, gender, ethnicity, or political affiliation are treated justly and with dignity. Here is where I see my ministry. I am deeply grateful for the love and support of the St. David's community during this part of my journey.



## It's a Tik Tok Christmas

*Fr. Chris*

Negotiating this year's St David's Christmas pageant will be as innovative as it will be fun, as our parish plans a 5:00 pm Christmas Eve service that will include taped portions for those who still aren't comfortable coming to church, as well as live portions for those who are.

Currently St David's has about 60% of its weekly attendees coming in person on Sundays, and about 40% on Zoom. As Covid rates increase at this time, that may change, but this year's Christmas pageant is designed to cater to all.

Traditionally, our Christmas pageant is a chance for our young people to showcase their acting and singing talent, and this year will be no different. Our 5:00 pm service will feature a news desk with news anchors in the main sanctuary who will offer Christmas Eve updates as they are sent in by our young people who are recording them safely at their homes, ahead of time.

Finding a way to stay connected in turbulent times is a challenge for every faith community, and St David's continues to do all we can to keep our congregation vibrant and focused on the work of Jesus.

This year's pageant will use a mix of historical and contemporary vehicles to communicate the great story of Christmas, following Mary and Joseph as they make their trek to Bethlehem and welcome the savior of the world to Earth. Angels, shepherds, and plenty of one-liners will be featured prominently.

An advantage to this format is that those who come to the Christmas pageant in the sanctuary will have the same experience as those who participate via Zoom. And those who are unable to make the service in person or on Zoom will be able to watch a taped portion of the pageant. We are so thankful to God for our parish family and the way Jesus helps us stay focused on him.



## Christmas in Poetry

This is a different kind of Christmas—by no means a White Christmas, cold and cozy—but still Christmas in all its glory. The poet is a Jamaican—John Figueroa (August 1920 to March 1999). He lived, among other places in England, and so experienced both the popular White Christmas as well as the Christmas of years gone by in old Jamaica. *Submitted by Karen Robertson Henry*

### *Christmas Breeze*

Auntie would say ‘Ah! Christmas breeze’,  
as the Norther leapt from the continent  
across Caribbean seas,  
across our hills  
to herald Christmas,  
ham boiling in the yard  
plum pudding in the cloth  
(Let three stones bear the pot;  
And feed the hat-fanned fire).

This breeze in August cools a Summer’s day  
Here in England.

In December in Jamaica  
we would have called it *cold*,  
Cold Christmas Breeze,  
fringing the hill tops with its tumble  
of cloud, bringing in  
imported apples, and dances  
and rum (for older folk).  
For us, some needed clothes, and a pair  
of shoes squeezing every toe.  
And Midnight Mass:  
Adeste Fideles!

Some Faithful came --  
and why not? – a little drunk,  
some overdressed, but  
ever faithful.

Like Christmas Breeze  
returning every year, bearing  
not August’s end, nor October’s  
wind and rain but, Christmas  
and ‘starlights’  
and a certain sadness, except for Midnight Mass  
and the Faithful  
(‘The Night when Christ was born’)

I miss celebrations, but I miss most  
the people of faith  
who greeted warmly every year  
the Christmas Breeze.

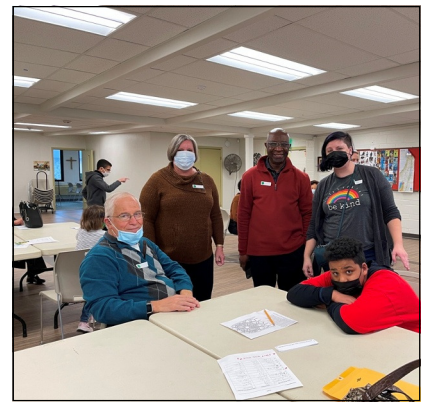
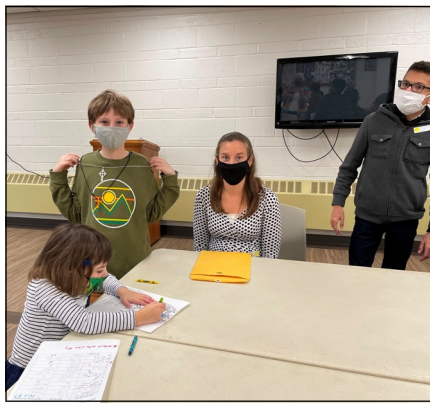


## Photo Gallery *by Joanne Sackett*



### Scavenger Hunt

Kitty and Judy planned a fun and educational scavenger hunt for us. Judy provided directions and divided us into four teams.—the red, blue, green and yellow teams.



We were instructed to find several things around the church including—a symbol of St. David with a dove, a brass symbol that was part of our original building (founding parishioners donated brass items from their homes which were then melted down and formed into two crosses), a photo of our first rector, and a memorial for Altar Guild Directress, Mabel Russell (founding member who served for 37 years).

When the hunt was over, we enjoyed a pizza lunch.





Nathan lights the first Advent Candle



Our intrepid announcers always add a little humor to the announcements.



Life Celebrations Sunday brings congratulations for birthdays, anniversaries, and other happy events.



The service is over. Go in peace



Fr. Steve is interviewed by Lighthouse staff about our Food Pantry.



A client has come in for some much needed food, and Fr. Steve loads a box into her truck.

## St. David's Episcopal Church

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[www.stdavidssf.org](http://www.stdavidssf.org)

## Christmas Poinsettia Remembrances

You are invited to make memorial or thanksgiving donations for the Christmas Poinsettias that grace our altar at Christmas. Envelopes will be on the table in the Narthex through December 12, which is the deadline to make contributions. Please write your names **clearly**, and the names of those you wish to honor and return the envelope to the office or place it in the collection plate no later than December 12.



## The Second Sunday of Advent December 5



The lighting of the first and second Advent candles.



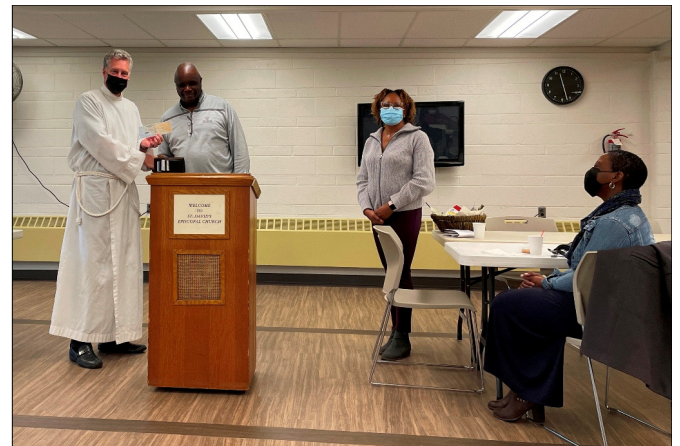
Look who came to visit today!



Fr Chris and St. Nicholas talk about how important it is to help one another.



The choir performs another beautiful anthem—  
*Every Valley* by John Ness Beck



Fr Chris introduces our speaker, Mr. Ray Moulden, at the Connection Hour after our service. Mr. Moulden told us about his journey from the lower west side of Detroit to owning the Allstate Insurance Company across the street from St. David's. He surprised us all with a \$500 check for our outreach programs.