



St. David's Episcopal Church
DECEMBER DOVETALE
2023

MISSION STATEMENT:

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to love and serve God and community, committing ourselves to lives of joyful worship, prayer, and the teaching of Scripture.

A Holy Advent

Please consider this an invitation to a holy Advent.

Advent, and the new Christian year, began on Sunday, December 3. Inside this issue of the *Dovetail*, you will find lots of ways you can observe the new season, both at Church and at home. I hope you will take advantage of many of them.

We will experience these weeks differently. Many of us will be busy with family and friends. Others of us may find this a difficult time as they struggle with loneliness or grief. All of us will be besieged with advertising and other messages telling us how we should feel, and what we should be doing, and mostly where we should spend our money. That is the reality of the Christmas season in contemporary America.

But in this season, the Church invites us to spend time in prayer and self-reflection, in preparation and hopefulness, in gratitude and loving service. What specific Advent activities work for you doesn't matter so much. But I encourage everyone to spend some intentional time with God over the next four weeks. Advent is a holy season of preparation to welcome our Lord come Christmas, as well as to grow in our relationship with God in the coming year.

I also encourage everyone to let others know what you are doing to observe Advent. There is, I think, a spiritual hunger in contemporary America that only God can satisfy. But many people need a little encouragement to address that deepest need.

The Christmas season is a complicated time. But whatever else it is, it is also a time when people expect to hear about the Christ child, when people's attention turns to worship at least some of the time, when people pause to reflect on what matters most.

My prayer for us in this season is that our lives witness to what truly matters.

In the name of the coming Christ.

Harvey +

PRAYER CYCLES: by Fr. Harvey

The 2024 prayer cycles will soon be available in the narthex near the mail slots. The list of nations will not change, but we'll receive a new Diocesan Cycle of Prayer. The trickiest part for us is updating our own Parish Prayer Cycle. Please take a look at the version in the narthex, and let me know if you notice missing people or ministries! And, if you are not already doing so, I encourage you to give one or more of the prayer cycles a try. We can all use more prayers on our behalf!!!!

HEALING PRAYERS: by Fr. Harvey

We continue offering individual healing prayers after the 10:00 service most Sundays, but our format has changed. Instead of appointing a particular person to offer healing prayers each Sunday, any member of the healing team is potentially available any week. The current members are Sue O'Hare, Jim Shields, and Deacon Terry. If you are interested in receiving healing prayers, please let one of them know. Please let me know if you are interested in possibly joining the Team. If so, we can offer training. I believe the members of the Team would agree that offering healing prayers for someone is a powerful, spiritual experience.

FLOWERS AND THE ALTAR CANDLE

Most weeks, the flowers and/or the altar candles are given to the glory of God and in honor of someone important to us. If you would like to remember, honor, or give thanks for someone, please complete the form (available in the narthex), attach a check for the relevant amount, and return it to the office or put it in the collection plate. But for Christmas Eve, we have extra special flowers. If you would like to contribute towards them, please use the special Christmas form, which is also available in the narthex.

FRIDAY EVENTS: by Fr. Harvey

On Fridays we have a Healing Eucharist at noon, Bible Study at 1:00, and Contemplative Prayer at 2:30. All three are in person, but you can also join the last two by Zoom. All three will meet every Friday in December except the 29th. Please join us!

SAFE CHURCH TRAININGS

The Rev. Tanya Wallace, our Diocesan Safe Church Officer, will be leading Safe Church training on the following dates via Zoom. You can *register by clicking on the date* of your choice below. There is no cost to you; Saint David's will be billed. Thank you for helping to keep our churches safe!

Sunday, December 10 - 2:00-5:00 p.m. - Volunteers

Tues/Thurs, January 16 & 18 - 5:30-8:00 p.m., Clergy, Staff, Lay leaders

Wednesday, January 31 - 5:00-8:00 p.m., Volunteers

Saturday, February 10 - 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Clergy, Staff, Lay leaders

CHURCH WITHOUT WALLS: by Fr. Harvey

Our November Church was special because we were joined by our Confirmation Class! We did our standard short Eucharist, and then passed out lunches, with a little help from the girls. This month our week for CWW is December 3. And for a little Christmas flavor, we'll offer hats made by our Prayer Shawl Ministry!

Men's Bible Study: by Fr. Harvey

The Men's Bible Study continues to meet on Mondays at 7:00, now with a zoom option, although I'm guessing they will take off 12/25 and 1/1. If you would like to join them by Zoom, please contact me and I'll give you the link. Thanks!

PRISON BIBLE STUDY: by Fr. Harvey

This ministry continues to go well. Deacon Terry and friends lead it on the first Mondays of the month. Penny Miller, Mary Moore, and I lead it on the fourth Mondays. Other Churches and even a Jewish Cantor lead the sessions on the remaining Mondays. Our collective efforts impressed the Bishop enough that we got a mention in his Convention address! The women we are there to serve are a good group. As I have heard from many of the leaders, we may well learn more than the prisoners!! This month, the fourth Monday falls on Christmas Day, which means the study is cancelled by the prison administration. But Terry will spread the good news of Advent on December 4, and my gang will be back at it on January 22.

SACRED GROUND OPPORTUNITY: by Fr. Harvey

Sacred Ground is a film and book-based discussion series around issues of racism and Beloved Community. A few years ago, we teamed up with Saint Andrew's, Longmeadow to participate in a couple of Sacred Ground Circles, and I believe all those who participated would agree that it was a powerful and illuminating experience. The Beloved Community Commission of our Diocese is setting up a Zoom circle for interested people. There will also be supplementary sessions for those who have already participated in the 10-session series. Please see me for more information about either.

TUESDAY CONVERSATIONS: by Fr. Harvey

A group of us meet roughly every other Tuesday at 4:15 on Zoom to discuss a chapter of Richard Rohr's *Things Hidden: Scripture as Spirituality*. It's a great book, and it's not too late to join us! As I write this article, our December date will be Tuesday the 12th, when we'll finish chapter seven. Please talk to me if you would like more information about the book or our sessions. We'd love to have you!

THE CHOSEN: by Fr. Harvey

The Chosen is an ongoing series telling the story of Jesus and his disciples. It's available for free on YouTube. The series aims to stay close to Scripture as much as possible, while also offering a considerably expanded back-story for the disciples and many of the people healed by Jesus. The result is a fresh telling of the story. So far the series has run three seasons of something like eight episodes each, with four more seasons to come. There is also a short Christmas Special, which we'll watch and discuss on Tuesday, December 12 at 6:00PM. It can stand alone, so please join us whether or not you have seen the other episodes!

BOOKS BY SAINT DAVID'S AUTHORS: by Fr. Harvey

Three people from Saint David's have published books in the last month(!): Domenic Ciannella, *To Dance with Grief: Following the Rhythms and Motions of Mourning*; Scott Seabury, *She Keeled Over into the Liver Pate! And Other True Humorous Stories in the Life of an Episcopal Priest*; and Megan Amrich, *Show Up and Bring Coffee: How to Support Your Friends with Disabled Children*. Please join me in congratulating all three! I have read and recommend all three. You can borrow any of them from me. I also plan to put copies of all three in our library soon.

Women's Book Group

The Women's Book Group will meet on Sunday, December 17 at 11:15 in the Community Room to discuss *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles. All women are welcome, even if you haven't finished the book. For more information, please see Linda Seabury.

BIG BLUE DROP-IN CENTER (at Christ Church Cathedral)

The Big Blue Drop-In Center located in the undercroft of Christ Church Cathedral is once again looking for donations of gently used winter wear. We have seen a dramatic increase in the number of people who visit the Drop-In Center on Thursdays and are near 50 consistently each week. Many of our guests are homeless and in need of all types of clothing.

If you go through your closets and drawers and find items to donate, please drop them off. Please call the Cathedral first to schedule a time when someone will be there. 413 736-2742. We can use sweatpants and hoodies as well as coats, boots, gloves and other items needed for life on the streets. Thank You for your generosity.

THE JOHN O'HARE VETERANS LUNCHESES: by Fr. Harvey

I know the meal happened, and that it was a great success, with over forty in attendance. Unfortunately that's all I know because I was off leading a funeral during the meal. But we'll be back at it on Tuesday, December 5 beginning at 11:30. All veterans eat free. Everyone else is welcome to come help. Thanks!

In 2024, we are hoping to raise money specifically to support this ministry. Our idea is that people outside the parish might be interested in helping. But we certainly welcome donations from parishioners, too! Our plan is to invite people to sponsor a single veteran for a year's worth of meals for (I think) \$75. Please talk to Jo Joubert if you are interested in more information.

SAINT DAVID'S CALENDAR: By Fr. Harvey

You can now find every event scheduled at Saint David's, as well as every Saint David's event scheduled other places, on the calendar on our webpage. Take a look at it if you haven't already done so (<https://www.stdavidsagawam.org/calendar.html>). It's impressive! To add something to the calendar, please first check if the space and time you want are open. Then email our calendar keepers at saintdavidsMA@gmail.com to make your request. It will be official when you hear back from them.

THANK YOU!!! THANK YOU!!! THANK YOU!!!

From Kin Kozik

This is just a heartfelt thank you to everyone who donated scratch lottery tickets (or money for me to purchase them) for the Lottery Ticket Tree that we raffled off at the November 18th Bazaar this year. We had \$200.00 worth of scratch tickets on the tree. I could not have done this without all of the help from everyone who so generously donated tickets or money. This is a popular and easy way to raise money for the Church. We raised \$549.00. Our own church member, Diane Seaver, was the lucky winner of the prize. Thank you again to all who helped.

(And just a little side note from the Bazaar Committee, Kim you bring so much talent and so much energy to St. David's ! All of your work and generosity is very much appreciated. Thank you from all of St. David's. We love you.)

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE, by Fr. Harvey

We have a lot going on! A full schedule is posted in the narthex and included with my weekly email blasts, as well as listed on the calendar in this issue of the *Dovetale*. Here I'll be brief. I have organized events topically.

Worship: The first three of our Friday noon services of Holy Eucharist will have an Advent theme, although I'm not entirely sure what that will look like(!). The service on Friday December 22 will have a Blue Christmas theme.

Our Christmas Pageant will happen during the 10:00 service on December 17. The final Sunday of Advent is the morning of the 24th. That evening is our Christmas Eve service at 6:00. On Christmas Day, we'll have a single, quiet service at 9:00. And on December 31, we'll have Lessons and Carols at 10:00 (and a regular service at 8:00).

Children: Breakfast with Santa will be Saturday, December 9 from 9:00 to 11:00. As always, the event is free and open to the public. Please help spread the word! Children will rehearse for the Christmas pageant during Sunday School on 12/3 and 10. As noted above, the pageant itself will happen at the 10:00 service on December 17. Thanks to everyone involved in making it happen!

Advent Retreat: O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High, on zoom
Saturday, December 16 from 9:30 to 12:00 on Zoom

Guided by the Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, participants will enjoy a morning of listening, prayer, and conversation as they open themselves to the presence of Divine Love. The time together will include presentations, guided meditation, and gathering in small groups. Registration is free. See me for details.

Outreach: We continue with our usual outreach: the Veterans Lunch and Church without Walls. We will also collect food for the Parish Cupboard, and the Prayer Shawl Ministry is making hats and scarves for the needy. You might consider giving "Gifts for Life" this year instead of regular gifts. That is when you donate things like a well or a flock of chicks to a needy family in honor of someone you love. You can give these gifts through organizations like Episcopal Relief and Development. We have several catalogs in the narthex.

The main thing we do as a Church is the Agawam Christmas Project. ***Jude and Sue O'Hare have coordinating it*** for last year. As of this writing, Sue is still involved in this ministry, along with Dixie Lauzon and friends. We have the first set of names, as well as an option for donating gifts to the Senior Center. All gifts should be returned to the Church by December 14 at the latest. We'll deliver them on the 15th.

Formation: Here, too, we continue with our regular round of online Morning Prayer, Bible study, and similar offerings. We also have Advent devotionals in the narthex, as well as seasonal forms for saying Morning Prayer or Compline at home. We will have an Advent-Wreath making session on the first Sunday of Advent (12/3). That's a great Advent home devotional practice.

After the 10:00 service on December 10 and 17, we'll have a conversation about how we are each experiencing Advent. I am using a devotional by Victoria and Frank Logue called *Feasts of Feasts*, and I have extra copies if anyone would like one.

And on Tuesday, December 12 at 6:00PM, we'll watch and discuss the Christmas Special of the series *The Chosen*.

**"To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,
who is the Messiah, the Lord."**

ANNUAL MEETING ON JANUARY 28 by Fr. Harvey

Our annual meeting will be Sunday, January 28, following the 10:00 service. After the service, we'll take a short break to get food/set-up. Hopefully we can turn to business by 11:15. We'll present the 2023 financials and the 2024 budget, elect a new vestry, and discuss some of the annual reports. Hopefully the booklet of reports will be available the week before so that people will have a chance to look them over before the meeting itself. Please join us in our one business meeting of the year!

SNOW POLICY by Fr. Harvey

Now that winter is coming, you will see this article for the next several months. The Church will always be closed if Agawam High School closes for the day because of snow. On Sunday mornings, we have to make that call ourselves. When Church is closed, notice will appear on our webpage and on television stations 3, 6, 40, and 22. All meetings are presumed to be cancelled, including any meetings by outside groups that rent the Church property. Our full snow policy is posted on the bulletin board by the office. Thanks!

OUR VESTRY AND THE BUDGET by Fr Harvey

Our vestry does many things, but one of the most important is creating our budget. The vestry will be working on the 2024 budget this month. If you have suggestions about ways to save or spend money in 2024, please let someone on the vestry know. Thanks!!

CHURCH RENTALS: by Fr. Harvey

At this point St. David's has only four renters:

Mondays 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.	Over Eaters Anonymous
Thursdays 9:30-11:00 a.m.	Over Eaters Anonymous
Saturdays 7:00 -9:00 p.m.	Al-Anon
Saturdays 7:00- 8:30 p.m.	Narcotics Anonymous

The Rental Committee is very interested in finding reliable and responsible groups or individuals to become part of St. David's renters. Our Committee can use any help in finding said renters. IF you have any ideas please feel free to see Fr. Harvey with your suggestion or a member of the rental committee. (Helene Robbins, Bob Rendrick, Jo Joubert, David Wolos, Beth Kronlund, or John Litchfield. Our Budget thanks you.)

Creation Care Kids' Corner by Mary Moore

Look for these:

- * On warm days, some animals that are not true hibernators may wake up and leave their nest or den for a little while. On these days you may see black bears, chipmunks, or skunks.
- * Just before the middle of the month, on clear nights, you may see some shooting stars from the Geminid meteor shower. Another name for a shooting star is meteorite. When a meteor (a big chunk of rock) enters the Earth's atmosphere, the friction between it and the atmosphere makes the rock get so hot that it burns up. The burning rock is called a meteorite. Friction is 2 objects rubbing against each other. The faster the rubbing, the hotter things get. Imagine how fast the meteorite has to be traveling to in order to burn! **Activity:** Rub your hands together really fast. Can you feel them heat up?
- * The winter solstice is always on either December 20, 21, or 22. This is the day when the sun rises and sets as far south as it will ever get in the sky in the Northern Hemisphere, and we have the least amount of daylight. Where we live in Massachusetts, the sun will be setting before 4:30 in the afternoon on these days. **Activity:** If it is not cloudy on any of the 3 dates mentioned above, look towards the west and notice how far south the sun is at sunset. (When you are looking to the west, south is to your left.) If you remember six months later, you can do this at sunset again, on the summer solstice in June. But look to the northwest instead, because this is the day when the sun rises and sets as far north as it will ever be in the Northern Hemisphere.

****CHRISTMAS PAGEANT NEWS****

By Kim Kozik

Sunday, December 17 will SOON be here! Our Christmas Pageant is happening on this day as part of our 10:00 a.m. service. We are still IN NEED of some actors!!! We need Shepherds and wisemen!!! All age boys and girls are wanted!!! On December 3rd and December 10th, during the 10:00 service Sunday School classes, we will do a short lesson and then practice for the pageant during the classes. We need to get the costumes ready for everyone. This year we have some “special” new things happening during the pageant.

Please contact Kim Kozik or Norma Turcotte or Father Harvey if you can participate. Actors in the pageant will have to be at the church at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, December 17th to get ready for the pageant at 10:00.

PLEASE COME AND HELP US OUT!!!

ST. DAVID’S ANNUAL BAZAAR; by Ellen , Jo, Virginia

The Bazaar was a smashing success, we had a variety of vendors, who all expressed how happy they were at being at our event. They enjoyed how the team of Sandy and Michelle delivered coffee, donuts and popcorn to their stations.

Big thank you to Dina for taking over at the time of Jo getting sick. She helped to organize the Vendors and to do the banking for our St. David’s workers

The total amount realized was \$3,700.00. Thank you to this awesome group of workers.

First—Thankyou to Bob Rendrick, Jim Shields and Lenny Scott for setting up and resetting the room.

Thank you to Bob, Sue A. Marcel, Jim, and Larry for the Kitchen and yummy food

Thank you to Ellen Rendrick, and Kim Kozik for the 128 baskets that they raffled off. Also thank you to their helpers Linda, Mary and Ellen S. Thank you to Sue A. for all the gift cards she solicited from area businesses.

Thank you to Virginia for her St. David’s table and the help from Elizabeth. Great job.

Thank you to Carol Fabrycki for taking care of the St. David’s Development table.

Thank you to Beth for manning the 50/50 table.

Thank you again to Kim for the Scratch Ticket Tree.

Dixie, Val and Catherine Koziol for the awesome Bake goods table.

Thank you to Lynn and John Litchfield for taking care of the food menus and running the register for the funds.

Also thanks to all the bakers who furnished to goodies to sell.

DEVELOPMENT:

The Development Committee will be holding a “SPRING FLING” on March 9th. It will be inviting vendors to return to St. David’s and show their goods. More news to come.

The Dovetale will have a new feature called MY WHY STATEMENT.

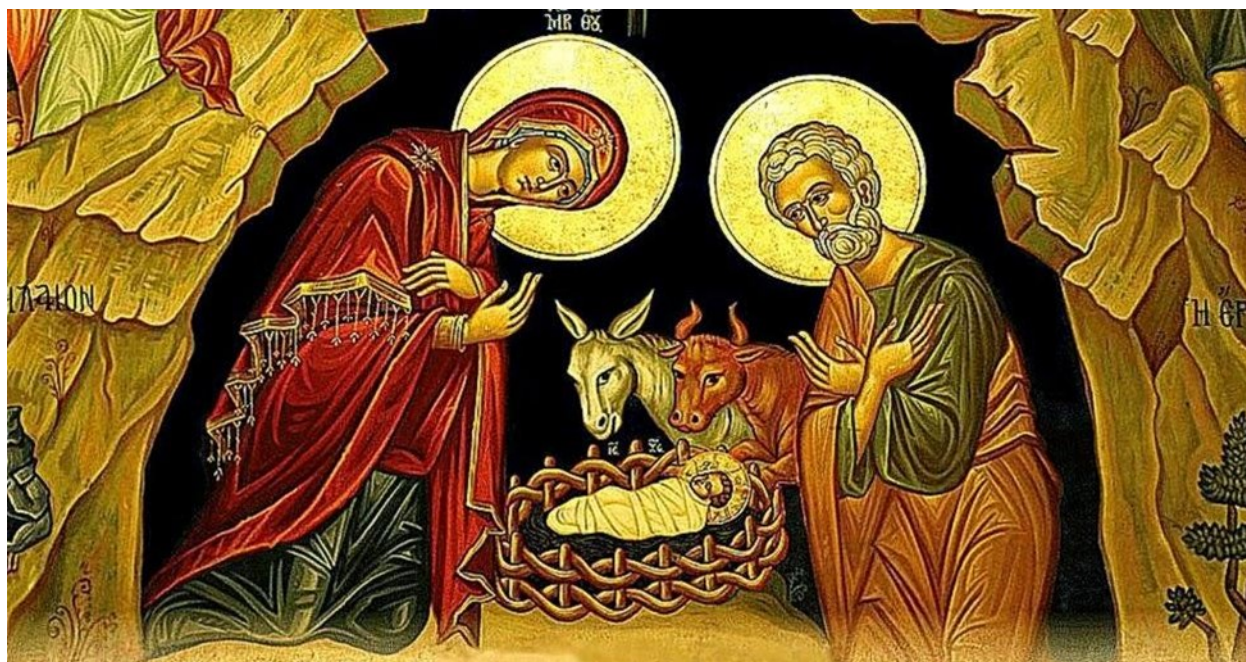
One of our St. David's members will expand on why they came to St. David's and stayed.

This month we will feature Jim shields.

MY WHY STATEMENT by Jim Shields

11/30/23

I was originally exposed to the Episcopal Church as a child, growing up in Longmeadow. We then switched to the Congregationalist church in town, where I was later confirmed in High School. Church was a good experience for me, but I must admit I was not particularly engaged, and as I moved on in life and went to college, church was not one of my priorities. Fast forward to 1984, my wild days largely behind me, I am married and have a beautiful daughter. My wife (who was raised Catholic) and I had a common desire to expose our daughter to the benefits of a Christian church (and home!) experience and thought that the Episcopal church would be a good fit. We found St. David's Church and checked it out. It was Bible-based, welcoming, had a good Sunday School program, it seemed to suit our needs perfectly. But we were primarily there for our daughter, truth be told. We even often took turns taking our daughter to church, to the extent that some folks wondered if we were married! Then a funny thing happened: we both really started to like the services, and we felt the Holy Spirit steadily working on us, and before long we were hooked on St. David's. Since those early days, much has happened in my life. My 2 children are grown, I am retired, unmarried, and a rock 'n roll drummer. The one constant in my life has been St. David's. My faith and spiritual growth have increased steadily through these 40 years of Sunday worship, Bible study, Confirmation, Vestry membership, multiple Ministry involvement, and fabulous Fellowship with my fellow parishioners. Sunday morning church is the hi-lite of my week. I have been incredibly blessed by God for bringing me back into the church, and to St David's in particular.



DECEMBER CALENDAR

Our Weekly Events

Sunday: Services at 8:00 and 10:00;

Sunday School at 10:00 (except 12/24 and 31)

Monday: Men's Bible study at 7:00 (except 12/25 and 1/1)

Wednesday: Choir Practice at 2:00

Friday: Healing Eucharist at 12:00 (except 12/29)

Bible Study at 1:00 (in person and Zoom) (except 12/29)

Contemplative Prayer at 2:30 (in person and Zoom) (except 12/29)

M-F: Compline at 8:00 PM (on Zoom)

Th-F: Morning Prayer at 8:00 AM (on Facebook)

Our Special Events

Sunday, December 3: Making Advent Wreaths at 11:15 in the sanctuary

Sunday, December 3: Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting at 11:15

Sunday, December 3: Church without Walls at 12:00 at the Parish Cupboard

Monday, December 4: Prison Bible Study at the WCCC at 7:00

Tuesday, December 5: Veterans Lunch at 12:00

Wednesday, December 6: Prayer Shawl Ministry at 2:00

Friday, December 8: Christmas Supper at 6:00

Saturday, December 9: Breakfast with Santa from 9:00-11:00

Sunday, December 10 and 17: Advent Conversations at 11:30

Tuesday, December 12: Tuesday Discussion Group at 4:15 on Google Meets

Tuesday, December 12: The Chosen Christmas Special Watch at 6:00 PM

Thursday, December 14: Gifts for Agawam Christmas Project due at Saint David's

Sunday, December 17: Christmas Pageant at 10:00 service

Wednesday, December 20: Vestry at 7:00

Friday, December 22: Blue Christmas Service at 12:00

Sunday, December 24: Greening the Church at 11:15AM

Sunday, December 24: Christmas Eve service at 5:00PM

Monday, December 25: Christmas Day service at 9:00AM

Monday, December 25: Prison Bible Study cancelled

Friday, December 29: Regular Friday events cancelled

Sunday, December 31: Lessons and Carols at 10:00

Regular Rentals

Mondays from 6:30-8:30 PM: OA

Thursdays from 9:30-11:00 AM: OA

Saturdays from 7:00 to 9:00 PM: Al-Anon Meeting

Saturdays from 7:00 to 8:30 PM: Narcotics Anonymous

All events are listed on the calendar on our webpage (<https://www.stdavidsagawam.org/calendar.html>). To reserve space for an event, please first check if the space and time you want are open. Then email our calendar keepers at saintdavidsMA@gmail.com. It will be official when you hear back from them.



It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20:35

PHONE: (413) 786—6133

FAX: (413) 786-4682

EMAIL: saintdavids@comcast.net

OR Jo's Cell 413-374-7756

E-Mail joubertjo77@comcast.net

**St, David's Episcopal Church
699 Springfield Street**