

## ***DEAR MEMBERS OF ADVENT FAMILY AND FRIENDS!***

With this issue, we mark the return of our parish newsletter, The Luminary. If you do not use a computer to receive and read it by its usual email distribution, please notify the church office, confirm with us a good mailing address, and it will be mailed to you. Of course, there will be copies available in the Narthex and church office, as before. Looking forward to hearing from you and sharing news of your organization's events, or news of the many good things going on in our parish community. Happy reading!

### ***LOOKING FOR THE "NEW NORMAL"***

It has been three years and three months since our lives changed forever with the emergence of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. Looking back on those early weeks in March 2020, it seemed unfathomable that our lives would be interrupted for three weeks or three months, let alone three-plus years. Yet here we find ourselves, resuming a familiar pattern to our parish life; but familiar only in the way that what we have been doing the last six to nine months, or even longer, has become the familiar routine.

Some people long out loud about "things getting back to normal," but what we once called normal in 2020 no longer exists—that ship has sailed. All of society around the world is look for what might be considered the "new normal," but no one seems to expect to hang onto that term confidently. As we have learned, things in the world can change fast. Viruses change, mutate, and resist antibiotics. "Normal" has certainly become a relative term, if not obsolete.

# **JULY/AUGUST 2023**



#### ***Our Mission:***

Creating a Christ- centered community through worship, generosity, and serving others - transforming lives by spiritual growth, caring for one another, and sharing our journey.

#### ***Our Vision:***

Fewer lonely people, fewer hungry people; more peace, more joy and love in the lives of those we serve.

## ***CONTINUED FROM FR. TIMOTHY***

At the last month's Vestry meeting on Sunday, June 25th, your vestry and I reviewed a document that we had hoped to guide us in our work in 2020. On February 8, 2020, vestry members, organization heads, and other interested members of Advent met in Paine Hall for a one-day workshop entitled, "Renewing God's Dream." In this workshop, led by a paid outside facilitator, we reviewed our participatory strategic plan that our lay leadership, affiliated clergy, and many interested parishioners helped create in November 2017. The February 8, 2020, workshop looked back at our successes, and our shortfalls, and we reviewed all elements of our plan to see if anything should be dropped that we felt no longer committed to doing and to add anything not discerned at that time in 2017 but to which we were committed to doing now.

The result of the February 2020 meeting produced some objectives for us to pursue that year; then one month later it all changed. For the remainder of 2020, we had to learn how to carry on as a church that couldn't gather for worship, except over the Internet—thus we met our "streaming church services" objective from the 2017 plan. And without being able to see each other in person, we also had to learn how to care from a distance for our people, among the most vulnerable of populations that could suffer greatly in the event of a COVID infection. Uncertainty and anxiety occupied our daily thoughts. The stress I personally experienced exceeded any other type of stress that I ever had gone through in my life.

But on Sunday, June 25, 2023, your vestry and I agreed that it is time to pick up where we left off on our strategic plan, to review the work we did accomplish on the plan over the past three to five years, to move ahead in finishing the incomplete objectives we had then, and adding new things we feel now that we need to accomplish.

The good news is that many things we restated at the planning meeting in February 2020 have been accomplished already! As I already mentioned, one of our goals was to live stream our church services, which began rather primitively on March 15th but as of now has become a very major and important production of our congregation. People from other parts of the world have watched funerals here at Advent when they're held in the church and were streaming it. So our live streaming of services begun in March 2020 is a classic example of an objective that we met and has been essential in keeping us together during the pandemic.

Other accomplished goals include: offering the catechumenate, "The Faith Seeking Journey," for new members and others who wish to go deeper in their faith at this time in their spiritual journey; increased use of social media (we have Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram); a balanced budget(!); increased attendance and membership; a sexton on staff; regular events to help people learn and use their spiritual gifts; and a plan for developing and appreciating volunteers every year, just to name a few outcomes.

This fall, we will once again create a schedule of opportunities for outreach and service involvement, and spiritual growth that seeks to meet the expressed needs of our parishioners. We are committed to listening to our members and their ideas and hopes for continued learning and service in our most amazing church in the Northwest Valley. Be sure to regularly visit our amazing website for up-to-date news about events and activities at Advent, take home the "This Little Light" weekly newsletter found in the bulletin, and look for more stories about people, places, and things in our monthly Luminary newsletter.

# ***A MUST-HAVE SAFETY FEATURE FOR PEOPLE WHO LIVE ALONE***

In the past few years, we have had parishioners who live alone and have fallen and not been able to get up or were otherwise incapacitated and unable to call anyone for help for an extended period. What a tragedy!

Most of us use smartphones of one type or another these days. Allow me to introduce you to Snug Safety, an app designed for the safety and welfare of seniors who live alone. (Many thanks to Nita Martin for introducing me to this app.) From their website: <https://www.snugsafe.com/how-snug-works>:

“Snug is the free daily check-in app for seniors who live alone. Snug checks in with you every day to confirm you’re okay and if there is no response, alerts your emergency contacts so you can quickly get help (and your pets will be taken care of too).

Snug has been used by thousands of Americans for over 10 million check-ins.”

Well, I remember a few years ago when one of our parishioners fell at home, and unfortunately, left his Life Alert button on his nightstand. He couldn’t get to it and was immobile for two or three days, lying prone on the floor in his bathroom. With Snug Safety basic plan, (free) “If you miss your daily check-in, Snug will send a text message to each emergency contact with your last known location. It is up to them to reach out to you to make sure you’re ok. The basic version is 100% free and without ads.” In my example above, perhaps our parishioner would have been on the floor for maybe a few hours instead of a few days.

Beloved, if you live alone, PLEASE ADD THIS APP TO YOUR PHONE! There is a free version that may work for most people, but if you prefer even more peace of mind, “On the paid version of Snug, (\$9.99 a month or \$99 a year) if you miss your check-in time, a Snug dispatcher will call your cell phone to ask if you’re all right. If you do not answer, they will call your emergency contacts to ask someone to check in on you. If the dispatcher is unable to get confirmation that someone will look in on you, they will request a wellness check. This is where a local authority such as the police, fire department, or emergency medical services visit your last known location or home address.” That’s as inexpensive as it gets for peace of mind and assurance of someone looking out for you.

Either way, please consider adding this safety feature to your phone if you live alone; your life may one day depend upon it.



## ***JULY ANNIVERSARIES***

James & Melody Nord July 2  
William & Barbara Higgins July 8  
Bryan & Judyth Couvillion July 14  
Mary Jane & Michael Swallow July 14  
David & Mary Jo Chew July 15  
James & Julia Bechtold July 18  
Richard & Andrea Ruder July 22  
Thomas & Barbara Wolfe July 26

## ***JULY BIRTHDAYS***

Bill Hyland July 1  
Marianne Prather July 1  
Gary Nicolosi July 2  
Jennifer Wesolowski July 5  
Lisa Sullivan July 6  
Robert Elmiger July 7  
Judith Purdy July 7  
Joan Latta July 8  
Sharon Paine July 8  
Damon Weems July 8  
Jerry Lang July 12  
Barbara Schafer July 13  
George Shawcross July 13  
Jack Hogan July 14  
Bruce Dockter July 15  
Marlene Berwald July 18  
Lucy Lynch July 18  
Dianne Adams July 19  
Jerrika Diaz July 22  
Jane Hawk July 22  
Yvonne Felts July 23  
Margaret Cacoperdo July 24  
Morrigan Necaie July 27  
Marsha Bathke July 29  
James Bechtold July 29  
Danny Hayes July 29  
Chet Maleszewski July 30

## ***AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES***

Brian & Elizabeth Heurlin August 7  
Gaye & James Wooldridge August 9  
Rex & Sharon Mather August 15  
Ken & Emilie Mead August 20  
Harry & Grace Roumell August 22  
Chet & Denise Maleszewski August 26  
John & Carol Teays August 30

## ***AUGUST BIRTHDAYS***

Marie Farmer-Sowle August 1  
Donna Contonis August 2  
Rachel Moore August 2  
Dorothy Ayan August 5  
Sharon Endean August 7  
Michael May August 7  
Richard Ruder August 7  
Tori VanRanken August 7  
Cecily Lansford - Sola August 9  
Michael Thurstlic August 11  
Pat McLaughlin August 12  
Derrick Necaie August 13  
Brian Heurlin August 14  
Jeanne Sulley August 14  
Cecilia Hyland August 15  
Kathy Garton August 16  
Susan Kelln August 17  
Cheryl McCartney August 17  
Olivette Miller August 20  
William Navratil August 20  
Bonnie Jacobs August 22  
Michael Swallow August 22  
Donna Andersson-Davis August 25  
Russell Brumagin August 25  
Andrea Ruder August 25  
Bruce Wilson August 26  
Kingdon Brady August 30  
Dorothea (Dolly) Reinerth August 30  
Judyth Couvillion August 31



**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY**

**HAPPY  
ANNIVERSARY**

## **SENIOR WARDEN SNIPPETS**

Advent has had a very successful year following the return to in-house church services and our regular yearly activities. In January, Rev. Canon Dombek announced a program entitled "Giving Away the Plate", which would provide donations to the parishioners' favorite charities throughout the year. All unspecified cash donations collected each week in the plate would go to a different designated charity. Through May this year, Advent has donated greater than \$11,000 to charities supported by you, the Advent parishioner.

Advent is now becoming more visible in the northwest valley, not merely in the retirement areas. Our frequent activities, i.e. special dinners, pizza and bingo nights, shredding events, etc., have attracted new members. And you, our church community members, have brought your friends and neighbors to these events. We have also started a Sunday school to attract younger families. Continue to spread the word that Advent accepts all to our services.

## **GRATITUDE & GENEROSITY COMMITTEE**

Thanks to all of the members that have made our 2023 "More Than Enough" annual campaign a success. As of the end of May, we were over \$31,000 ahead of last year and we have met 63% of our goal for 2023. Our "Pass the Plate" campaign is going far above what we had projected. Through June we have received \$13,279 in outreach funds from the "Pass the Plate" Thanks to everyone! We will kick off our 2024 annual campaign, "Rooted in Abundance" in November. Please remember that our Intentions are the amount we give to God through our work and activity at Advent.



## **JULY 2023 PLATES OF LOVE**

### **July 2: Dysart Community Center (DCC)**

Advent has a long-standing relationship with this full-service organization in the neighboring Dysart Community. DCC provides food, clothing, pre and after school programs, summer camp, language services and more. Learn more at [www.dysartcommunitycenter.com](http://www.dysartcommunitycenter.com).

### **July 9: Sun City West Kiwanis Foundations**

The SCW Kiwanis Foundation has been supporting children's outreach programs in the West Valley for more than 40 years. Our donations will help fund a weekend food program at Morrystown Elementary School. The program benefits 65 children with food assistance on the weekends. The Kiwanis group begins their fundraising efforts in the summer - to be prepared when school starts in the fall. Visit [www.kiwanissuncitywest.org](http://www.kiwanissuncitywest.org) for more information.

### **July 16: Advent Veteran's Meal Program**

Advent volunteers provide hot meals to 100 veterans quarterly at U.S. Vets Center in Phoenix. Advent participates in the program with four other Episcopal Churches in the (each church covers one quarter). Please consider supporting this important Advent ministry with your monetary and/or volunteer efforts. Contact Advent parishioner, Jack Hanstein, at 623-512-7608 for more information.

### **July 23: Clergy Discretionary Fund**

This special fund provides assistance to parishioners and others in need, as determined by Advent Clergy.

### **July 30: Westbrook Posse**

Westbrook Posse has been providing security services for Westbrook Village residents since 1999. The program is supported entirely through generous donations and 18,000+ volunteer hours. Several Advent parishioners live in Westbrook Village.

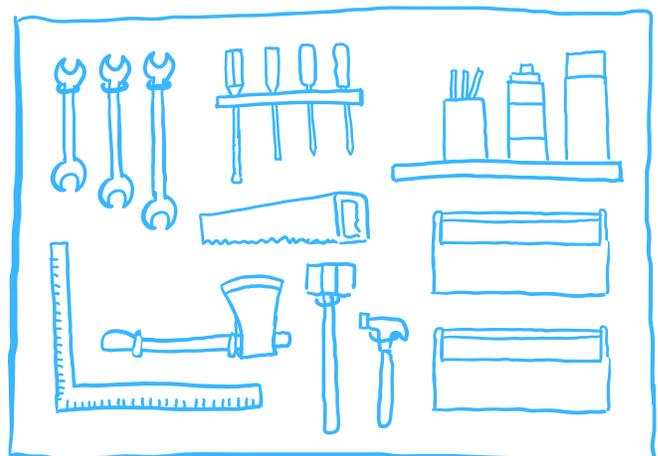
## ***JUNIOR WARDEN SNIPPETS***

Hard to imagine that it has already been six months since I started as Junior Warden. I want to thank everyone for being so supportive, particularly Earl Yingling, my predecessor. The reality of the position was made very clear that first week with a leak in the roof above the church office reception area and then another in the Technology room soon thereafter. Besides quickly learning the size of the job to manage the day-to-day requirements of the existing infrastructure, I also learned that we need to significantly improve in our identification, logging, monitoring, and management of all our current assets. This includes generating a much better understanding of ALL the current assets, their current state, previous maintenance performed, future maintenance requirements, life expectancy, end of life (EOL) plan/strategy, projected replacement cost at EOL, and tracking total cost of ownership. Besides addressing the day-to-day issues that occur that include HVAC issues, like we recently experienced, this improvement in our ability to actually manage all the wonderful assets that we have been blest with, is my top priority. Second to that is to increase the overall level of understanding, within the Advent Community, of the need to recognize and purposely fund the ongoing costs related to those current assets and any future assets.

The Vestry has agreed to funding of deferred maintenance in 2023 based on budget performance. We need to do more in 2024. (I think I just coined a new slogan.) The Vestry has asked that, as we pull together much of the data required, we focus on the larger financial impact and higher priority assets.

This is in itself, no short list and includes items such as the maintenance/repair/replacement of: eight HVAC units; extensive tile and foam roofing; fire alarm and fire suppression systems; parking lots and related painting, striping, and property signage; exterior lighting; interior lighting; kitchen appliances; audiovisual systems; communication systems including internet and phone; irrigation and plumbing systems including hot water heaters. I provide one somewhat fictitious example of why this is so important - assume one of our large HVAC units is nearing the end of life. We have been performing repairs as they are needed. However, the available parts are becoming scarce or are no longer available. We have not set any funds aside for the eventual replacement of the unit and the lead time to secure a replacement is several months with payment due in advance. Based on the latest data of replacement cost, funding required will be at least \$30,000 - \$40,000. Getting this level of funding when it was not planned for is difficult at best. Recognizing and establishing regular funding over the expected life of the asset is logical and much less painful.

Now you know what keeps me up at night! I sincerely appreciate any and all suggestions and input on how to be the best stewards of our many assets.



## ***MEMORIAL GARDEN***

As of July 1, 2023, all the granite plaques in the Memorial Garden have been relocated to the outside east wall of the church. We await the delivery of 2 large 3'x6' plaque boards to remember future interred members of our Advent family. It is estimated that these boards will be installed by our men's club by the end of July.

Planting 2 short bushes or slow-growing trees is scheduled for the Memorial Garden following the summer heat and adding additional small decorative rocks around the outside of the altar.

The new bank of 72-inch wall niches is installed in the columbarium area opposite the reflection benches and the Wall of Remembrance is just to the left of the niches.

The Wall of Remembrance is for those Advent parishioners who have chosen to be interred elsewhere but remembered at Advent.

Please see Dianne Diaz, Natalie Ostrowski, or Jim Bechtold for more specific information.

We encourage you to spend time walking through the Meditation Garden, behind Paine Hall to an area of tranquility, a pergola for shade, benches for rest, meditation, and remembrance of our loved ones.

## ***PLAN YOUR "CELEBRATION OF LIFE" SERVICE***

One of the most loving and considerate deeds that we can do for our loved ones is to make our final arrangements before we die. Is this something that you keep putting off or on your to-do-list? Let us help you!

Gaye Wooldridge, our Bereavement Coordinator, and Deacon Debbie Greenleaf will be holding a funeral planning class on Wednesday, July 19th at 1pm in the Conference Room. Come join us and we can assist you in planning your service, your reception and your final resting place. Please feel free to contact Deacon Debbie @ 208-409-3517 if you have any questions.

## ***A SPECIAL REQUEST***

In deference to some with allergies in our church community, please refrain from wearing strongly scented perfumes and lotions to our services/events. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

## ***NEWCOMER'S MINISTRY***

Advent continues to draw new families to our church community, even through the heat of the summer. We have an additional 23 new members thus far in 2023 representing 18 households. Many of our new members have found us on the internet and our new Facebook page. You will recognize them by the yellow dot on their name tags. They have come to us from communities in Phoenix, Surprise, Peoria, Sun City and Sun City West. Please provide a warm Advent welcome as you see them at our church services and activities.

## ***ST. MARY'S FOOD BANK ALLIANCE***

Summer is here and people of all ages still go hungry in this hot weather. Every food donation or dollar helps hungry people here in the Surprise area.

May Food Donations = 63 lbs

May Monies = \$100

June Food Donations = 82 lbs

June Monies = \$107

Y.T.D Food = 222 lbs

Y.T.D Monies = \$624



## ***ADVENT WEBSITE TASK FORCE***

The Advent Website Task Force members continue to update the website every week with the latest worship bulletins and Upcoming Events. The group meets monthly to discuss new ways to increase website traffic, solve any issues, and improve navigation. Current projects include replacing the aerial video, increasing the social media presence, and sending monthly emails to help drive more traffic to the website. The month that ranked highest in the number of visitors to the site since the new site went live in 2022 was March 2023 with 951 visitors. The average time per visit was 5:50 minutes, which is significantly higher than the industry standard of 2-3 minutes. While our June 2023 traffic report shows fewer visitors than in March (600 visitors), the average time per visit is longer at 7:26 minutes! Visitors have decreased in May and June likely due to summer travels by our parishioners and fewer church activities to check on. The Advent Website group is also looking forward to presenting some of the recent improvements to the website at an upcoming Fellowship and Food gathering.

The June 2023 Traffic Report clearly shows that our traveling worship parishioners are visiting the Advent website (hopefully watching services via Livestream) from states as far away as Colorado, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Nevada.

The top ten pages visited in June 2023 were:

1. Home page
2. Upcoming events
3. Livestream
4. Sunday videos
5. Photo Gallery
6. Church calendar
7. About clergy / staff
8. Other videos
9. Contact us
10. New to Advent

*If you have any questions, please visit [adventaz.org](http://adventaz.org)!*

## ***HELPING HANDS***

Helping Hands will be meeting July 3, 10, and 17th at 9:00 AM and August 7, 14, and 21st at 9:00 AM in Paine Hall. Happy Hat Hookers will be meeting on July 24 and 31st and August 28th. Join us for a cup of coffee and enjoy some fun and fellowship.

## ***WOMEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT BIBLE STUDY***

Join Raph Martin for a Bible Study Wednesdays at 10 AM to 12 PM, in Dibbs Hall, from July 12th to August 16th on women in the New Testament.

## ***OFFICE VOLUNTEERS***

Starting in September, a volunteer will be needed in the office every single weekday. While we have a great staff already, we are in need of awesome individuals who may be available on short notice, or who can fill in on certain days on an irregular schedule. Please contact the office if you have any questions or would like to help!

## ***TELECARE HEALTH MINISTRY***

Our ministry that keeps up with and calls those who are sick, or in need of prayer, will return to active calling in the fall.

*Are you following us on social media?*



***Advent Episcopal Church,  
Sun City West, AZ***



***@Adventscw***



***@Adventchurchaz***

## ***ADVENT CHURCH WOMEN***

The ACW builds the women's church family by providing opportunities to serve the church, the members, and the community. All women at Advent are members of ACW. We would love to see you at our three general meetings/luncheons throughout the year. Our first luncheon is Thursday, October 12th in Paine Hall. It will be a Fall Fashion Show presented by Chico's. We need four more models. More information to follow. We are helping the Men's Club with the following events in July and August:

Pizza and Bingo on Wednesday, July 26th at 5:00 in Paine Hall  
Pizza and Bingo on Wednesday, August 30th at 5:00 in Paine Hall.  
ACW looks forward to seeing you at these two summer events. It's always nice to cool off with friends while playing games. LeeAnn Overbay is our "Bingo Caller Extraordinaire". We are blessed to be able to give to the following programs in our community: Fighter County Foundation at Luke, Episcopal Habitat for Humanity, St. Mary's Food Bank, Community Fund of Sun City West, Surprise Police Department Victim's Advocacy, Hospice of the Valley, Valley View Food Bank, Soldier's Best Friend, Dysart Community Center, Goldensun, Ukraine Relief, and New Leaf Shelter. The ACW helps within our church community by giving to the Vets Lunch, Kitchen Fund, Helping Hands, and Happy Hat Hookers. Please consider sharing your talents by becoming an active member of the Advent Church Women. We look forward to welcoming new ideas and working with each of you.

## ***DAUGHTERS OF THE KING, IS IT FOR ME?***

The Daughters of the King is a religious order whose mission is to extend Christ's kingdom through Prayer, Service, and Evangelism. No special spiritual attributes are needed to become a Daughter of the King—only a desire to draw nearer to God and to help others do the same.

"We are women to whom parishioners can look to for love and help in times of need or loneliness.". We seek to walk with God as our Guide and work to spread Christ's kingdom here on earth.

Our Clare of Assisi Chapter here at Advent is committed to service at our Church. We sponsor Quiet Days, Blue Christmas, walk the Stations of the Cross, and assist when requested by the Rector on other activities. We meet once a month on the 3rd Sunday at noon in the Conference Room where we join together in prayer, meditation, and Bible Study. We do not meet in June, July or August. This past year we read and discussed Bishop Curry's book "Love is the Way". We mutually agree on the topic for the year at our first meeting in September.

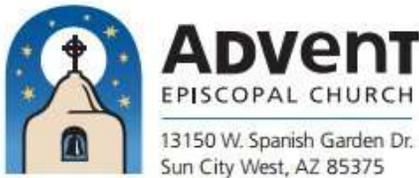
We are a welcoming and loving group of women and invite any woman who is interested in joining us to contact Lynn Long (925-324-7473 or [lynsey1904@gmail.com](mailto:lynsey1904@gmail.com)) if you would like more information.

## ***BROTHERHOOD OF ST. ANDREW***

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew is a worldwide ministry with over 4,000 members in 357 chapters in the US alone. This newly chartered Advent Chapter meets monthly to gather in prayer for the spread of Christ's Kingdom, to study the Holy Scriptures, and to bring others nearer to Christ through outreach in the community. Next meeting is Tuesday, July 11th at 8:30 AM. All men of Advent are welcome.

## **PASCUA YAQUI TRIBE MEMBERS VISIT ADVENT EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

On April 29, Advent Episcopal Church hosted members of the Pascua Yaqui tribe for a day of relationship-building and cultural exchange. The Pascua Yaqui group arrived by bus from the Old Pascua Village in Tucson, AZ. Episcopal Church parishioners from churches throughout the Valley and the Pascua Yaqui tribe members shared stories, toured the church, viewed a private art collection of Native American art, and enjoyed a delicious lunch prepared by Advent's Daughters of the King. Advent Episcopal Church began its relationship with members of the Pascua Yaqui tribe eight years ago. The relationship continued from afar during the worst year of Covid19 and has developed and strengthened ever since. Advent parishioners have plans to visit Old Pascua Village in early December for a communal meal and gift exchange



## **PET MEMORIAL GARDEN**

The Pet Memorial Garden is located in Advent's Meditation Garden and it features a statue of St. Francis of Assisi.

A short memorial service and the internment of your pet's ashes are conducted in this garden. The ashes of 10 pets have already been interred. If you want your pet's ashes interred in the Pet Memorial Garden, please contact Chris Turner at the following:

Phone #: 623-680-0270 or email [christint85@gmail.com](mailto:christint85@gmail.com)

## **GOD'S BIG-BIG HOUSE**

Sunday School for children. The 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. Bible stories, music, crafts, and games. Children will start out with the big people in the sanctuary. Then before the scripture readings, they head to their own classroom where they will learn at their own level. They will return to take communion.