

selfishness and go the way of those Paul writes about in Romans: “They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen” (Romans 1:25).

Isaiah 7:10-25; Psalm 31; Luke 22:14-30

**Anniversary:** Matt & Kimberly Brooks

**Friday's Calendar**

7:00 a.m. AA “Hour of Power”  
9:00 a.m. A Way Out  
9:30 a.m. Life Group  
10:00 a.m. Bible Study  
8:00 p.m. Friday Night Young Peoples’ AA

**Today's Ministry:** Stephen Ministry

**Saturday, December 15**

Isaiah 8:1-15 *He will be a sanctuary; but for both houses of Israel he will be a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.* (v.14a)

I can't recall the source, but you may have heard it said, “There are only two things you can do with Jesus—either enthrone him in your heart or eliminate him from your life.” I wrote these words down on a piece of paper many years ago and put them on my mirror. The little piece of paper has disappeared (I suspect in one of our many moves), but it doesn't matter because I have the words hidden in my heart.

I've stumbled and fallen enough to know that I'm not a happy camper when I go my own way. Jesus knows that loving him with my whole heart and following in his steps is the only way to true freedom and peace in my soul. I no longer believe that it is true; I know that it is true. God designed us in His image and only when Jesus is the cornerstone on which everything else is built do all the other pieces fit. We have only two choices—either he is the cornerstone of our lives or the rock over which we stumble.

Psalms 30, 32; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-18; Luke 22:31-38

**Birthdays:** Dick Kurts, Roberta Breene, Janet Giannotti, Debra Aquino

**Saturday's Calendar**

7:00 a.m. AA “Hour of Power”  
9:00 a.m. CPR/First Aide Course  
9:30 a.m. AA Step Study for Women  
5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

**Today's Ministry:** Stewardship Committee

*By Jack and Gail Potter*

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**“Growing into Jesus - Reaching out with love”**

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**St. Mary's**

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

*Growing into Jesus - Reaching out with Love*

**Good News Daily**

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**Sunday, December 9**

2 Peter 3:11-18 *Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.* (vv.11-12a NIV)

In our human condition we are all speeding toward growing up and growing older. Health spas, pills, and creams abound in our attempt to delay the inevitable. Now, as I joyfully embrace my grandchildren, I find that I ponder eternity ever more frequently, and I wonder what “the day of God” will be like.

I have a saying on my bulletin board that prompts me to stop and think seriously about where I've been, how I'm living, and the ways in which choices I make will affect the future. I don't recall who said it, but the saying goes like this: “My reaction in every situation is a witness for or against me in eternity.” This is a pretty sobering thought, but it causes me to ponder what the Lord will say when I stand before him and give an account of my life. Have you ever wondered if the Lord will ask you questions such as, “What did you do with my son, Jesus?” or “What did you do with the love I gave to you to give to others?”

I am certainly thankful that Jesus will be there with me on that day, just as he promised.

Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalms 148, 149, 150; Luke 7:28-35

**Birthdays:** Diane Foley, Emily Von Aldenbruck, Becca Bassion

**Sunday's Calendar**

REPAIR AND IMPROVEMENT SUNDAY  
7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I  
9:00 a.m. Contemporary Family Worship Service  
9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II  
10:15 a.m. Coffee Hour - Smith Hall after 9:00 A.M. Services  
11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II  
2:00 p.m. Advent Prayer Walk  
4:00 p.m. Prayer Walk Community Dinner

**Today's Ministry:** Outreach Committee

### Monday, December 10

Luke 21:20-28 *“When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”* (v.28)

The disciples were sitting at Jesus’ feet eager to learn all they could from the Master. The disciples had just been talking about “how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God” (v.5). In his infinite wisdom, Jesus chose that moment to tell them about the signs of the end of the age. The disciples were all ears. “‘Teacher,’ they asked, ‘when will these things happen?’” (v.7). What Jesus describes is not a pretty picture: warring nations, earthquakes, famines, pestilence, persecution of believers, betrayal by family members (do these things sound familiar?), even heavenly bodies would be shaken. It will be a time of terror and apprehension, of being so totally out of control that the only thing that will save us will be Jesus’ return.

Jesus is the reason and the hope that has enabled believers to stand firm throughout the ages in the face of extreme adversity. When all else fails—and Jesus has told us it will—we must stand up and lift up our heads, because our redemption is drawing near.

Isaiah 5:8-12,18-23; Psalm 25; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

**Birthdays:** Harriet Stone, Cecil Sewell, Shawn Wyder, Laura McKinney, Christian Gerbino

### Monday’s Calendar

7:00 a.m.	AA “Hour of Power”
10:00 a.m.	Apples to Apples
5:30 p.m.	ACA Families
5:30 p.m.	Soul Care

**Today’s Ministry:** Praise Band

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### Tuesday, December 11

1 Thessalonians 5:12-28 *Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.* (v.16)

Darlene Rose’s missionary assignment in Papua, New Guinea, was cut short when she was captured by the Japanese, separated from her husband (whom she never saw again), and imprisoned for four years in a concentration camp during World War II. Her story is about her loving relationship with Jesus that brought her great joy amidst deplorable, rat-infested living conditions, hunger that drove her to eat maggot-infested food, and the psychological terror of expecting to be executed at any moment.

Darlene sought the Lord’s help in prayer, moment by moment, and made herself available to do His work. One time, the Lord opened the way for her to lay the Plan of Salvation before the Japanese camp commander! Jesus had promised Darlene that he would never leave her or forsake her.

She ends her story with a heartfelt thank you to Jesus because he had kept his promise and she was drawn closer to him through her experience. Her story is an encouragement for us as we face life’s challenges. Being in Christ Jesus, we too can “be joyful always; pray continually; [and] give thanks in all circumstances.”

Isaiah 5:13-17, 24-25; Psalms 26, 28; Luke 21:29-38

**Birthdays:** Barbara Dupont, Jennifer Morris, Peggy Wood,

### Tuesday’s Calendar

7:00 a.m.	AA “Hour of Power”
12:10 p.m.	Holy Eucharist & Healing
6:00 p.m.	Overeaters’ Anonymous
5:00 p.m.	Facility Meeting

**Today’s Ministry:** Praying Hands

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### Wednesday, December 12

2 Thessalonians 1:1-12 *With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.* (v.11)

Throughout his letters, Paul is constantly praying for faithful believers to continue to grow in their faith. I’m sure Paul prayed for the sick and dying, but his main focus seems to be lifting up believers so that they would stand strong and courageous in the work God had called them to do.

One of my favorite prayers of Paul is Colossians 1:9-14. Four or five years ago, I wrote Paul’s prayer in a note to a prison inmate who had become a Christian to let him know I was lifting his name up in that prayer.

As I witness God’s healing of body, mind, and spirit for people on our parish prayer line, I find I’m lead to pray that God would not only heal the ailment, but that His healing will be the seed that opens their eyes to His love or strengthens their faith in Him. Following Paul’s example, our prayer line should go beyond praying for the sick and include prayers for our fellow believers that they remain steadfast in their faith and bring glory to His Holy Name.

Isaiah 6:1-13; Psalm 38; John 7:53—8:11

**Birthdays:** Melinda White, Natalie Norris

### Wednesday’s Calendar

6:30 a.m.	Men’s Bible Study
7:00 a.m.	AA “Hour of Power”
9:30 a.m.	Holy Eucharist
10:00 a.m.	Staff Meeting
10:00 a.m.	Adult Life Group
11:00 a.m.	Stephen Ministry Care
2:00 a.m.	Mary’s Book Group
4:45 p.m.	Mary’s Kitchen
5:30 p.m.	AA “Daily Reflections”
6:00 p.m.	Life Groups

**Today’s Ministry:** Shepherd Group

### Thursday, December 13

Psalms 37:1-18 *Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noontday sun.* (vv.5-6)

In the margin of Psalm 37 in my Bible I had written September 26, 1993 and 15 times on that day I wrote the word “trust” beside verses that speak of trust in the Lord. Where were we on that September day? My husband was beginning his third year of seminary. After 25 years in the business world and raising two children, the Lord was drawing us further into His ministry.

As we began that third year of schooling, there were questions and doubts. Were we prepared for the awesome task of doing the Lord’s work? Was there a parish in our home diocese that would welcome a couple over 50? If not, were we prepared to go wherever the Lord was calling us?

We are continuing to learn to trust in the Lord as we work in parish ministry and the more we trust in Him the more we depend on Him. We are finding that there is no other way. He has blessed us and delighted our hearts beyond measure. To God be the glory—great things He hath done!

Isaiah 7:1-9; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Luke 22:1-13

**Birthday:** Susie Speer

**Anniversary:** Charles & Danie Girl Victor-Laguerre

### Thursday’s Calendar

7:00 a.m.	AA “Hour of Power”
10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist
5:00 p.m.	Warden’s Meeting
5:30 p.m.	ACA Men’s Group
6:30 p.m.	Choir
7:00 p.m.	AI-Anon “Stepping Stones”

**Today’s Ministry:** St. Mary’s Closet Thirft Store

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### Friday, December 14

2 Thessalonians 2:13—3:5 *So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.* (v.15)

In yesterday’s reading from Isaiah, our sovereign Lord says to Ahaz, King of Judah, “The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is only Remaliah’s son. If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all” (Isaiah 7:9). Here, again, in Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians, he is exhorting believers to “stand firm” in their faith and hold tight to the teachings of Christ.

As Christians today, in a world where doing wrong is being cheered and doing right is being scoffed at, we need to plant our feet firmly in the Word of God and hold on to His righteous teachings with every ounce of strength and courage we have.

We must hold fast to God’s teachings of truth and right living as found in the Scriptures or we will be blown by the strong winds of human