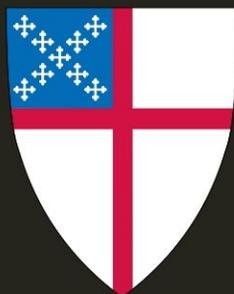


# *THE SHREWSBURY IN VISION*

December  
2023



SHREWSBURY EPISCOPAL PARISH



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www.shrewsburyparish.org

# *From the Rector*

## *Endings and Beginnings*

When I came to Shrewsbury in 2010, we celebrated four services at Christmas; three on Christmas Eve and one on Christmas morning. Always joyful and meaningful, the services over the years have waxed and waned in the number of attendees. The two years of “covid era” services certainly put a dent on our usual strong attendance. Last year 77 people came to church at 4:00 pm and 22 at 7:00 pm. Looking at the records over the years tells us that the early service is clearly the most attended of all.

After consulting with clergy friends, the Leadership Team, our organist Kevin Wekke, our Altar Guild Director Catherine Davis and the entire Vestry, we will be moving to two Christmas services this year; one on Christmas Eve and one on Christmas morning. You will see the schedule elsewhere in this newsletter and in our Sunday bulletin and on our website.

Interestingly enough, there has been universal agreement from all who have been consulted on this decision. While there may be some who for various reasons wish a later evening or a midnight service on Christmas Eve, please know such services exist at other area churches. Also know, that the majority of Episcopal parishes our size (Average Sunday Attendance of 53) have already or are moving to a similar Christmas schedule. Though sad for many of us, church attendance nationally continues to fall, as do the need for so many services on major Feast days such as Christmas. What we are finding at least in my experience, is that we are a smaller parish, but the vast majority of our active members are just that, “Active Members.” We may be smaller in size, but the amount of activity, participation and ministry you are involved in is amazing.

And so my friends, welcome to a new horizon of ministry and liturgy at Shrewsbury. As the former General Manager of the Oakland Athletics, Billy Beane once said, “Adapt or...die!” As a rural congregation in a very small county, we too would be well advised to take heed of that message. This is no longer your grandparents style of church. The church of the future will be very different. It already is.

Which brings me to the second half of this writing, *beginnings*. As I write this on the threshold of the sacred season of Advent, we end one year and begin another in the Church. The scriptures will have much to say over the course of four weeks about the “end times” and then the beginning of the new birth of the promised Messiah. That was and will be again a true beginning of God’s new covenant with God’s people.

Perhaps it also could be for us at Shrewsbury a blessed opportunity. An opportunity to begin (again) to look at who we are, where we are in ministry and where we hope and plan to go over the next year and longer. Much has changed since I came in the fall of 2010. It is time to begin to look forward to what God may be calling us to for the near and even the distant future. My plan will be to ask our Vestry and Leadership Team to reflect on these questions and others early in 2024. I encourage you to talk with me and your Wardens and Vestry members when we make that invitation, which to quote the great hymn will be “soon and very soon.” Yes my friends, we are going to see the Lord, Alleluia, Alleluia!

A Blessed Advent and a Joyous Christmas,

Henry+

The Rev. Henry Sabetti



**Join Us for Advent & Christmas Services**

*The Fourth Sunday of Advent*

*December 24, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.*

*Christmas Eve*

*December 24, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.*

*Christmas Day*

*December 25, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.*

*The First Sunday after Christmas*

*December 31, 2023*

*One Service at 9:00 am*

*Christmas Lessons & Carols*

*with Holy Eucharist Rite II*

*Parish Breakfast of yogurt, bagels, fruit,  
juice & coffee*



### Parish Office Christmas Closing

The Parish Office will be closed from Friday, December 22nd until it reopens on Tuesday, January 2nd. Both the Administrative Assistant and the Rector will be off during this time. Please conduct any necessary business before or after these dates. In the event of a pastoral emergency, please call the Rector on his cell phone:

Fr. Henry Sabetti 301-418-0908

Have a joyous Christmas Season!

### Shrewsbury Angel Tree

Our Christmas tree will be in the parish hall . You can help a family by providing a gift for a child in our community. The tree is decorated with Angel Tags with a child's age and the item needed. Please provide the one gift suggested so each child in the family gets an equal number of gifts. Return the gift by December 10, 2023 wrapped with the entire tag on the top of the package. Monetary donations are always welcome and should be taken to Parish office. Checks should be made payable to Shrewsbury Parish Church Outreach Program. If you have any questions, contact Sue Coleman at [magpiesuz@gmail.com](mailto:magpiesuz@gmail.com)

### Flowers on the Altar

Sue Coleman will be working on the 2024 Flower Chart and it will basically remain the same as 2023 unless the provider wants to make changes. Contact Sue if you want the flowers saved for you. Please let the person on altar duty know you want them so they can put them in a container for you. If you want special flowers or colors in your arrangement, contact Anthony's Flowers. You will be billed after your week or you may set up automatic payment with Anthony's. Dates that are open for flowers on the altar for 2024 are June 2, June 23, July 7, Sept 1, and Dec.8.

Contact Sue Coleman or add your name to the chart in the Church narthex.

(under the 2023 flower chart)

**Community Relations Liaison:  
Carol Louise Niemand  
(aka Niemy)**

After many years of active and loyal service to the parish and the community of Kent County, Carol Niemand will be transitioning from her role as our Community Relations Liaison on January 1, 2024. She leaves a huge void for us and many.

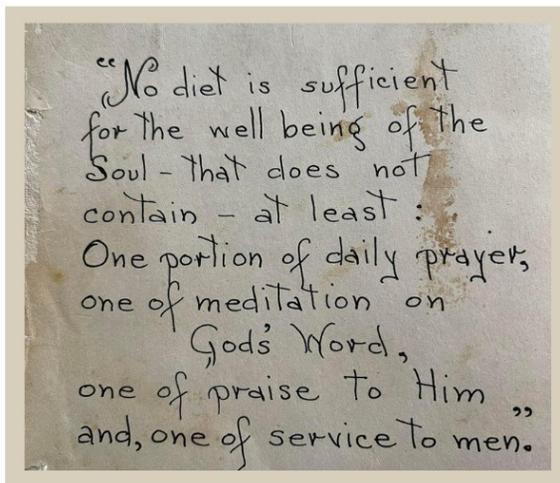
Carol has been a tremendous help to this parish and countless numbers of people in Kent County. Her advocacy, networking and chutzpah has been instrumental in securing housing for several previously homeless families. She has been a constant "thorn in the side" for many of our governmental and social service agencies, including the Town Council of Chestertown and the Kent County Commissioners.



She is one of the few people who can go from the Driftwood Motel to the Chestertown Yacht and Country Club and not miss a beat, a conversation or a face. Carol exemplifies the very best of lay ministry in the Church and in the world.

From all of us a Shrewsbury Parish, we thank you Carol and we ask God's blessings upon you as you journey forth guided by God's Holy Spirit.

Fr. Henry and the Shrewsbury Leadership Team and Vestry



Unknown



## Annual Pledge

**Thank you** to all who submitted their annual pledge card. Your treasurers use these cards as the foundation of the church's annual budget. Overall, the pledge amounts to about 65% of expenditures for essentials like personnel and utilities , giving us a start on planning for the needs of the church in the coming year. We usually refer the card as a "pledge" although it's an estimate of annual giving, not an actual pledge. The first draft of the budget will go to the Vestry for review at its January meeting and to the entire congregation for approval at the annual meeting in February.



## Poinsettias

The Altar Guild has ordered poinsettias to be placed in the church for Christmas memorials or honorariums. The price is \$12 per pot. If you would like to reserve one or more, please fill out the form below and leave in the church office with your check made payable to: Shrewsbury Church, and poinsettia in the memo line by December 18, 2023. You may also email the below information to the church office at [shrewsburychurch@gmail.com](mailto:shrewsburychurch@gmail.com). Questions? contact Carol Niemand 703-864-7139; [mscarolniemand@gmail.com](mailto:mscarolniemand@gmail.com)

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

In loving memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In living memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Number of flowers \_\_\_\_\_

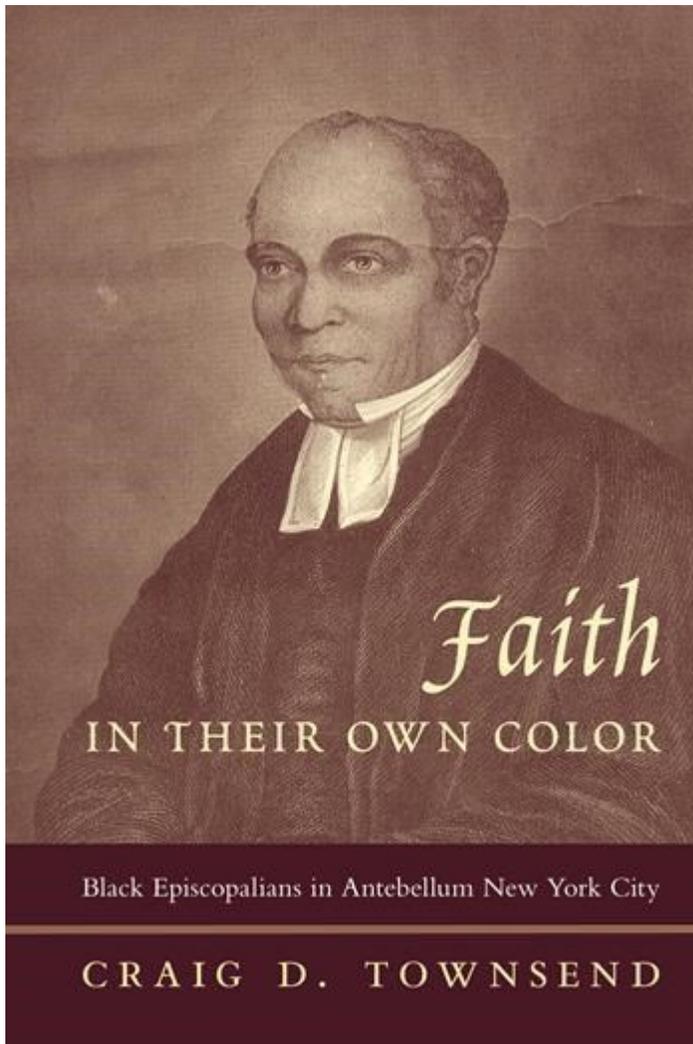
Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## FAITH IN THEIR OWN COLOR: Black Episcopalians in Antebellum New York City

By Craig D. Townsend

Columbia University Press, New York, NY, July 2023

(Pp. 256, paperback, \$25)



Even though slavery had been abolished in the state of New York in 1827, the Fugitive Slave Law (1850) hindered freedom to the black population to the point of treating the African Americans as insignificant. However, three brave black Episcopal men from St. Philip's Church, New York City, which operated under the arm of Trinity Church on Wall Street, took their seat at the Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of New York to ensure that they be admitted as a delegation and to declare that the Convention and Diocese can no longer deny them the right to attend and to be a fully functioning church within the confines of the Diocese of New York. These three men, Peter Ray, Henry Scott, and Philip White affirmed its memberships' desire to be African American Episcopalians and brought about this change of religious identity for St. Philip's freedom to be a viable church and equal partners within the Diocese of New York.

The relations between black and white New Yorkers were oppressive, yet the black Americans wanted to be accepted as equals. Proving themselves as equal and viable members of society created a separateness to "demonstrate their equal capabilities" with their white counterparts. White

Americans had no difficulties in establishing themselves or choosing their faith; this was just another aspect of the American identity. This book is an encounter for its reader to view the struggles of oppression, compromise, negotiation, and pride as the black community finds their place within (white) society. With the help and grace of God the acknowledgement began with this small triumph of St. Philip's Church.

Review by: Pamela Ann Quarstein; Shrewsbury Parish Church, Kennedyville, MD



Congratulations to Paul & Hannah  
Samuels on their wedding!  
July 22, 2023



Alex & Lyndsie Bacchus on their  
wedding which was officiated by  
The Rev. Henry Sabetti on  
September 22, 2023

