



# Saint Benedict the Moor Parish

*Personal Parish for Black Catholics in Pittsburgh*

## Mass Schedule

Sunday 10:30 am

Livestream: [facebook.com/SBTMPGH/live](https://facebook.com/SBTMPGH/live)

Sacrament of Reconciliation,  
Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals  
by appointment.



Our church is accessible.

## Staff

Rev. Thomas J. Burke, Pastor: [tburke@diopitt.org](mailto:tburke@diopitt.org)

Rev. David H. Taylor, Senior Parochial Vicar:  
[dtaylor@diopitt.org](mailto:dtaylor@diopitt.org)

Rev. C. Matthew Hawkins, Parochial Vicar:  
[mhawkins@diopitt.org](mailto:mhawkins@diopitt.org)

Christopher Catone, Music Director

Priscilla Davis, Office Manager

Jeannette Finch, Sacristan

Ray Krivanek, Maintenance

Cathy Raffaele, Bulletin Editor:  
[craffaele@stmarymagph.org](mailto:craffaele@stmarymagph.org)

[office@sbtmparishpgh.com](mailto:office@sbtmparishpgh.com)

412.281.3141

**THIRD SUNDAY**  
OF  
*Advent*

As the earth brings forth its plants,  
and a garden makes its growth spring up,  
so will the Lord God make justice and praise  
spring up before all the nations.

Isaiah 61:11

DECEMBER 13, 2020

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Saint Benedict the Moor Church  
91 Crawford Street  
Pittsburgh PA 15219

Website:  
[sbtmparishpgh.com](http://sbtmparishpgh.com)



St. Benedict the Moor Parish-PGH



SBTMPARISHPGH



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## Mass Intentions

December 13  
Fr. Thomas Burke

Third Sunday of Advent

December 20,  
Fr. David Taylor

Fourth Sunday of Advent



This week  
the Sanctuary Candle  
is lit in Thanksgiving  
to the Blessed Mother  
of the Miraculous Medal.

Jeanette Finch

## Stewardship December 6

Offertory	PSP	Special Collections
\$5,230.00	\$415.00	\$800.00

**Year End Contributions** If you were thinking of making a year-end contribution to our parish, anyone who is 70 ½ years old before 12/31/2020 and has a retirement account, can make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD).

Required Minimum Distributions (RMD's) have been waived for 2020 by the CARES ACT. Please consider making a QCD to St. Benedict the Moor Parish.

The funds withdrawn **must** be made **directly** to the parish from the custodian. The custodian will send you a Form 1099 showing that the QCD was made and that the withdrawal amount is **not taxable income**.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. **Remember withdrawals must be made prior to December 31, 2020.**

**Online Giving** To sign up at Faith Direct, for regular contributions or for a one time gift, visit [faithdirect.net](http://faithdirect.net) and use church code PA1097. Enrollment forms are available in church.

A direct link to Faith Direct and enrollment forms are on the homepage of our website:

[sbtparishpgh.com](http://sbtparishpgh.com)

## BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS EARLY DEADLINES

**December 27: due Tuesday, December 15, at 9 am.**  
**January 3: due Monday, December 21, at 9 am**

[craffaele@stmarymagpgh.org](mailto:craffaele@stmarymagpgh.org)

**As a Faith Community,**  
we pray for all who request prayers.

*Edward Davis, Rita Davis, Dolores Denton,  
Lydia Francis, Marie Francis, Woody Frazier,  
James Fuller, Ann Fultz, Janet Glass, Brenda Glenn,  
Mary Graham, Sandra Johnson, Salima Kamadoli,  
Aisha Lado, Josephine O'Connor, Mary Samuels,  
Genevieve Sanford, Janice Simmons, Vincent Tucker,  
and Rudolph Williams*

Our parish community prays for those who request prayers for any reason. If you, a family member, or friend would like to be on our prayer list, please contact Cathy at 412.661.7222 or [craffaele@stmarymagpgh.org](mailto:craffaele@stmarymagpgh.org).

**Bible Study with Fr. Matthew** is on Thursdays at 7 pm on Zoom. The study will also be posted, with a short mini-lecture, on our website and YouTube.

For more information, contact Fr. Matthew at 412.661.7222 or [mhawkins@diopitt.org](mailto:mhawkins@diopitt.org).

To register (required): [craffaele@stmarymagpgh.org](mailto:craffaele@stmarymagpgh.org)

**The 2021 Christmas Calendars** are in. The price is still \$4.00. Please see Theresa Orlando at the display case or call the church office at 412.281.3141.



**CATHOLIC EDUCATION PLUS** Radio Program, with Fr. Tom Burke as host, is broadcast every other Sunday

morning on KDKA-AM. Fr. Tom's next program is on December 20. Link to the podcasts of the program on KDKA:

[kdkaradio.radio.com/media/podcast/catholic-education-plus](http://kdkaradio.radio.com/media/podcast/catholic-education-plus)

**Vagabond Missions Update** We are so thankful that Fr. Tom has graciously allowed us to use the SBTM basement as a temporary home for our youth center, which we call "The Underground". With the generous help of our donors, we've been able to transform the space into an incredible place for our teens to hang out and build community with one another.

In addition to continuing to take teens to *Breakout at the Garfield Underground*, we've slowly begun to host small events at our Underground in hopes of starting our own Breakout nights at the beginning of the New Year. Please continue to pray for teens and our Hill District missionaries!

[blackfacts.com](http://blackfacts.com)

**On December 13, Ella Baker** was born in Norfolk, Virginia. A civil rights worker who directed the New York branch of the NAACP, Baker became executive director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in the 1960's during student integration of lunch counters in the southern states. She also played a key role in the formation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and its voter registration drive in Mississippi.

## PASTOR'S NOTE



### Rejoice!

Traditionally, the third Sunday of Advent is called "Gaudete Sunday" which means Rejoice! We are half way to Christmas! The pink candle in our Advent wreath signifies joy and hope and this weekend's readings focus on rejoicing.

In today's first reading from Isaiah, we read how Isaiah rejoices as he brings glad tidings of God's vindication for his people. In the second reading, from the Letter to the Thessalonians, we read how Paul encourages rejoicing as God prepares his people for the return of the Lord. In the gospel of St. John, we read how John the Baptist testifies to the light and cries out in the desert to make straight the way of the Lord. He spoke about Jesus and helped people be ready for his message and prepared the people to be ready for Jesus' ministry.

Advent is a season of waiting in joyful hope for the coming of the Lord. Gaudete Sunday affirms the value of rejoicing and gives reasons for rejoicing. With great rejoicing and longing for Christ's return, let us take John's words to heart and prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic and the cold winter season, let us light the pink candle this weekend and see the light of Christ shine on us and bring joy to someone who may be lonely or grieving the loss of a loved one this holiday season by making a phone call or writing a card to someone we have not talked to in a while. Let us rejoice this Gaudete Sunday!

### Rejoice!

## Parish Improvements

We are waiting for Matt Mertz Plumbing to continue to repair the main waterline at The Center on Bedford Avenue. When they started the project a few weeks ago they found more outdated pipes that needed to be replaced and we had to seek permits from the Pittsburgh Water Authority and the City of Pittsburgh. The cost of this major project has increased to \$46,000. We are seeking an insurance claim to help offset the cost.

Kapp Communications installed four new phones in the parish office. We are working on removing four extra phone lines that are not being used on our Verizon Bill.

\*Please note that due to the recent leg injury of our Office Manager, Priscilla Davis, we are delaying on reopening our parish offices until after the New Years holiday. Priscilla is recovering at home and will work from home for the next few weeks. We wish a speedy recovery for! The phone lines are still being forwarded to the St. Mary Magdalene Parish Office so you are still able to reach the priests via phone or e-mail.

## Mass Intentions

There are Mass intention openings for the 10:30am Sunday masses. If you would like to have a mass said for your loved ones, celebrating a special occasion such as a birthday or anniversary, please contact Priscilla Davis by e-mail at [Office@sbtmparish-pgh.com](mailto:Office@sbtmparish-pgh.com)

## Communications/Media Volunteer

We are looking for a parishioner who has expertise in social media/communications to oversee our Facebook page, website and bulletin. If you are interested, please give me a call at 412.661.7222 ext. 202 or email me at [tburke@diopitt.org](mailto:tburke@diopitt.org)

## New Bulletin Coming Soon!

We will be getting a new bulletin company Diocesan Publications in the next several weeks to publish our weekly bulletin and there will be an opportunity for parishioners who have businesses to place an Ad of their business in our new bulletin. What a great way to support our parish and support our own parishioners. For more information please contact Ron Borza, Sales Manager, at 412-897-6610 or e-mail at [RBorza@Diocesan.com](mailto:RBorza@Diocesan.com)

## Looking Ahead

**Christmas Eve - Thursday, December 24, 9pm**  
**Christmas Day - Friday, December 25, 10:30am**  
**New Years Eve - Thursday, December 31, 6:30pm**

**2021 Parish Calendars are now available for a suggested \$4.00 donation.** Please see a Greeter to purchase one.

**Please note that from Wednesday afternoon through Thursday, I am out of the office for my day off. I usually try to limit checking emails and messages while I am off to get refreshed and recharged. Please hold any phone calls or emails if possible, Wednesday and Thursday. In an emergency Fr. Matthew and Fr. Taylor are available.**

**Welcome Jennifer Lynn Whitley** who recently registered at St. Benedict the Moor Parish.

## Something to Think About...

*The world looks brighter from behind a smile.*

With God, All Things Are Possible!

Fr. Tom Burke, Pastor  
[tburke@diopitt.org](mailto:tburke@diopitt.org)

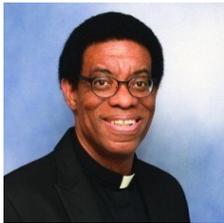
## Fr. David Taylor



A reason to rejoice. The third Sunday of Advent brings us to the mid-point of the season. There is a sense of joy and anticipation as we await the Nativity. But in so many ways the hope and joy of the season are lost in the many challenges we face at this time.

The Prophet Isaiah speaks of an ability to have hope even in a time of great distress. The troubles we now face should never take away our ability to be of love and service to others. Yes, we can rejoice even when life is full of trouble.

## Fr. Matthew Hawkins



During Mass this week you will notice something that is different. Instead of taking our responsorial psalm from the book of psalms, as is our usual practice, this week, we turn to the poetic prayer of the Magnificat, uttered by Mary as she visited Elizabeth and was preparing to give birth to Jesus. Our

Blessed Mother's prayer is a poetic prayer of hope, renewal, and vindication. She makes this prayer despite the personal and national circumstances that would cause weaker souls to give in to despair and doubt.

Mary says: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked upon his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed." Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, which reminds us of how vulnerable we are and how transitory life is, we too proclaim the greatness of the Lord and cast aside the temptation to allow fear to consume us. Mary's Magnificat expresses a deep understanding that the Lord will turn the world on its head. She proclaims: "He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy."

Our Christian sensibility helps us to understand how intertwined our destinies are, even though we allow ourselves to be divided by transitory things. The very nature of the way that the virus spreads forces us to see how connected we are even as our uneven response to the virus, and the looming economic crisis that has come with it, reveals our persistent and deepening social divisions.

This is a season when we find much happiness being in the company of others. But for our own health and that of others we must forgo many of our social encounters. However, as people of faith we continue to be the voice of hope to one another.

Advent allows us to look at the sufferings of the present times all the while knowing there will be a better time. As the Psalmist tells us 'Let us go rejoicing to the House of the Lord'.

In times of confusion and doubt we are prone to feed on these divisions. During such times of social crisis, we are in need of spiritual discernment. Paul's First letter to the Thessalonians teaches us to move ahead cautiously, with a discerning heart and a listening ear that is attuned to the voice of God. Paul warns us: "Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil."

Fear and division are debilitating. Catholic social teaching shows us the way forward. We must deepen our sense of solidarity. We will never be fulfilled until we learn to live in solidarity with one another, especially in our darkest hours. To be witnesses who herald the coming of the Lord and the fulfillment of God's promises is a lonely task. John the Baptist described himself as being "the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'make straight the way of the Lord.'" It is lonely to traverse a landscape that is as spiritually barren.

This is why we need solidarity. This is why we must encourage one another and accompany each other on the journey. If we try to make this journey alone, with a radical sense of individualism, we will succumb to folly. Instead, when we go forward as a community of faith, like the prophet Isaiah we will have the confidence to say: "The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the LORD and a day of vindication by our God."

