

ILLUMINARE

Volume 29, Number 24

December 14, 2011

SPIRITUAL FOOD FOR CHRISTMAS THOUGHT

As the holiday/holy day draws near, the pace seems to quicken even more. There isn't time to get it all done, is there? We may have begun already to think longingly of that moment on Christmas afternoon when, at last, we can STOP! And thanks be to God for it. But spiritually speaking, Christmas doesn't stop at 4 o'clock on Christmas afternoon. Indeed, it has just begun. Remember it will continue to be Christmas for twelve leisurely and more relaxed days, through the first week in January. Take a look at your calendar. I'll bet it's pretty clear — a time to rest and pray and even think about the things that matter most. That is my prayer for you and for me. To help you along that path, here are some thoughts and prayers that commend themselves to me this Advent. Find a quiet spot, find some quiet time, read them through, ponder them in your heart, make some notes if that helps, say your prayers, join us for Christmas-tide worship. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a gift is given." On behalf of the Vestry, staff, and my clergy colleagues, may God bring you a holy, joyful, and renewing Christmas!

Fr. Tom

"Find I must borrow yet another parable from George MacDonald. Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on. But presently He starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of — throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it Himself."

C. S. Lewis

Our liberation, our solitude, our vision, our understanding and our salvation do not depend on anything remote from us or beyond our reach. Grace has been given us along with our good desires. What is needed is the faith to accept it and the energy to put our faith to work in situations that may not seem to us to be promising. The Holy Spirit will do the rest.

Thomas Merton

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightening about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us, it's in everyone. And as we let our light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our fear, our presence liberates others.

Nelson Mandela

During Advent we are invited to come out, let go, open up — not to forsake the things we love and want for our lives, but to forsake them as idols — to learn to hold them lightly, without clinging, and to be willing to give them up when it becomes clear that they are taking up too much room...Advent is about preparing a place for something new in our lives... and then waiting with nothing but faith, hope and love for a company in the stillness that teaches us how completely we live at God's mercy.

Barbara Brown Taylor

Waiting is essential to the spiritual life. But waiting as a disciple of Jesus is not an empty waiting. It is waiting with a promise in our hearts that makes already present what we are waiting for. We wait during Advent for the birth of Jesus. We wait after Easter for the coming of the Spirit, and after the Ascension of Jesus we wait for his coming again in glory. We are always waiting in the conviction that we have already seen God's footsteps. Waiting for God is an active, alert — yes, joyful — waiting. As we wait we remember him for whom we are waiting, and as we remember him we create a community ready to welcome him when he comes.

Henri Nouwen

OUR THANKS FOR YOUR PLEDGES STILL TIME TO GET ON BOARD

As 2012 draws closer, the Vestry is crafting a draft parish budget for next year for both income and expenses. We are sooo grateful to the 159 of you who have already made a pledge as of December 9. We are \$32,000 ahead of our total as of this date one year ago. Increased pledges outnumber decreases by almost 3-1. There remain about 80 regular pledgers who have not yet committed for 2012 – please complete and return a pledge card before January 1. We need your continued giving!

If you have never pledged before, 2012 is the year to begin. No pledge is too small – our more important goal as a Christian community is to move closer and closer toward 100% participation. If you are new to the parish and have not pledged before, we hope you will prayerfully consider doing so and help us to plan our ministries and costs as predictably as possible. If you have questions, concerns, or encouragement, please contact our Co-Treasurers, Bobby Coxe, (b_coxe@yahoo.com), Darci Senner, (dsenner@aol.com), our Finance Committee Chair, Skip Scoggin, (skip@mmsre.com), or one of the parish clergy. The Vestry will consider a draft budget in December and hopes to be able to finalize a balanced plan by mid-January. And of course, year-end gifts are always welcome! Please keep our work of oversight in your prayers.

The Christ Church Finance Committee

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS



Christmas flowers are a wonderful memorial for loved ones or a beautiful gift for the person who has everything! Envelopes are available in the church and chapel pews. Donations must be received in the church office by Sunday, December 18 for acknowledgment in the Christmas bulletin.

KUDOS



Thank you to everyone who purchased gifts for our Christmas Giving Tree. Special thanks to those who picked up the remaining hearts from the tree and purchased last minute gifts.

SPOTLIGHT ON STEWARDSHIP: Erin Cain

Erin Cain and her husband Will came to Christ Church two years ago. A busy mother of three, Erin had her youngest child, a girl just recently. She also has two boys ages 6 and 3. The Cains came to us from Lafayette and are life long Episcopalians. Erin said she and Will "grew up in the Episcopal Church and were always active in youth groups." And so now as a mother, Erin is involving herself with ministries for young children as a way of giving back to the next generation what was given to her. Her ministries include Kids On a Mission, Mindful Mothering, as well as Mindful Parenting, which deals with such issues as teaching children how to pray and how to treat others. She is also involved with Play and Pray, a playgroup for mothers with pre-schoolers where the children can play with their peers while their mothers build bonds with each other. Erin stated that leaving her home and friends in Lafayette has been made much easier through the warmth and welcome she and her family have received at Christ Church. Her philosophy on giving, "As a young family, watching our budget we can still give generously of ourselves and our time, it feels good to us."



FEAST OF LIGHTS

Service January 6th at 7:00pm Dinner at 6:00pm.

Come for the joyful, enlightening, bell-ringing, service of The Feast of Lights which celebrates the Epiphany - the manifestation of Jesus Christ to all the peoples of the earth. Join us at 6:00 in the parish hall for dinner and kings' cake. The service begins in the parish hall at 7:00pm, processes to the church for Eucharist, and finishes on the front steps as we take our light into the world! All in an hour! Feel free to bring your own light source and musical instrument. Some candles, glow sticks, and bells can be borrowed for the celebration.

"O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

And so begins our collect for the day.

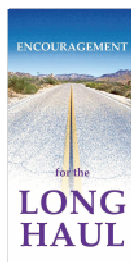


ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE LONG HAUL

Barbara Crafton is an Episcopal priest and author. She heads The Geranium Farm, an institute for the promotion of spiritual growth. The Farm publishes her Almost-Daily eMo, a meditation read online by tens of thousands worldwide via email or at the website. She has served a number of churches and as a chaplain at Ground Zero after the attack on the World Trade Center. A spiritual director, Crafton leads retreats and teaches throughout

the United States and abroad. Her many works include books of essays books of daily meditations, and several others; a book of poetry, a book about the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in the aftermath of the World Trade Center bombing and, most recently, a book about how people of faith experience depression (Jesus Wept: When Faith and Depression Meet).

Rev. Barbara Crafton will hold a one day seminar on Saturday, January 14 from 9:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m. at St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 2216 Metairie Rd., Metairie, La. The Rev. Crafton will speak on, as she puts it, "offering reasonable encouragement for the long haul in life." No cost for the seminar, lunch is \$10. Please direct questions and pre-registration information to craftonseminar@yahoo.com.

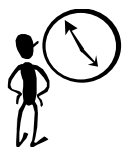


THIRD SUNDAY CONCERT



The next Third Sunday Concert will feature Patti Adams on flute and Yui Asano on piano on Sunday, December 18 at 5 p.m. The program will include a *Christmas Suite* as well as music of J.S. Bach, Gary Schocker, Jean-Michel a Sonata by our own choir member and former organist Bill Horne! Damase and The concert is and followed by a reception.

IMPORTANT!



**Service
Schedule
Time Change**
On **Sunday, January 1** we will have

one service at **10:00 a.m.** No 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services on this day. **No 6:00 p.m. services on this date.**

HANDS THAT TOUCH HEARTS Patron Party/Silent Auction

Plans are underway for our first annual *Hands That Touch Hearts* patron party and silent auction to take place on February 4, 2012. We need volunteers to make this party pop! Support our community ministries: CEEP, Caritas Early Learning Classes, the Caritas Summer Experience for Girls, and the youth Mission Beyond trips. Any gift of time is greatly appreciated. If you would like to volunteer for the party committee, contact Fr. Tom at 892-3177 or tblackmon@christchurchcovington.com





CHRIST CHURCH CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE



December 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, & 23

6:00 p.m. Evensong: The "O Antiphons" in the Chapel

Saturday, December 24
Christmas Eve

1:00 p.m. *Festival Eucharist of Christmas in the Church
4:00 p.m. *Vigil Eucharist of Christmas with hymns in the Church
8:00 p.m. Vigil Eucharist of Christmas with hymns in the Chapel
11:00 p.m. Festival Midnight Eucharist of Christmas
(Choral Prelude begins at 10:30 p.m.)

Sunday, December 25
Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. Eucharist of Christmas Day in the Chapel

Sunday, January 1
Feast of the Holy Name

7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I in the Church
10:00 a.m. *Holy Eucharist Rite II in the Church
Note: one service at 10:00 a.m. No 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services on this day.
No 6:00 p.m. service this evening

Friday, January 6
Feast of Epiphany
And Festival of Lights

6:00 p.m. Dinner in the Parish Hall
7:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist starting in the Parish Hall
and moving to the Church

**Indicates childcare is available.*
(Note change—no childcare on December 24 at 8:00 p.m. or 11:00 p.m.)

The church office will be closed for Christmas at noon on Friday, December 23 and on Monday, December 26.
The office will close for New Year's holiday on Friday, December 30 and reopen at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, January 2, 2012.



Christ Church, Covington

*An Episcopal Church and School
in the Diocese of Louisiana*

120 S. New Hampshire St.
Covington, Louisiana 70433
(985) 892-3177

fax - (985) 892-3187

Early Childhood Center - (985) 892-9156

Christwood Blvd. Campus - (985) 871-9902

www.christchurchcovington.com

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The Rev'd A. Thomas Blackmon, Rector

tblackmon@christchurchcovington.com

The Rev'd Anne M. Maxwell, Associate Rector

amaxwell@christchurchcovington.com

The Rev'd Winston E. Rice, Assisting

wrice@christchurchcovington.com

Mr. John Morvant - Head of School

PARISH STAFF

Susan Griffis *Parish Administrator*

sgriffis@christchurchcovington.com

Laura Robert *Publications Coordinator*

publications@christchurchcovington.com

Eunice Hutchison *Receptionist*

receptionist@christchurchcovington.com

Daniel Ciufi *Youth Minister*

dciufi@christchurchcovington.com

Sherri Nozik *Asst. Youth Minister*

youth@christchurchcovington.com

Mary Anne Reidy *Parish Life Coordinator*

mareidy@christchurchcovington.com

Martha Smart *Godly Play Coordinator*

godlyplay@christepiscopalchurch.com

Kathleen Turner *Newcomer Ministries*

kturner@christchurchcovington.com

Carolyn Parmenter *Director of Music*

Jessica Sermons *Organist*

Max Welch *Assistant Organist*

Benjie Branson *Assisting Organist*

Buddy Anderson *Nursery Coordinator*

Chuck Aversa *Facilities Coordinator*

VESTRY

2009-2012—Jeff Bell, Mark Berry,

Michelle Gallagher, Lucie Thornton

2010-2013—Bill Batson, Mel Elliott,

Jim Valliant, Paul Vining

2011-2014 — Mary Thomas Coady, Patterson Conner,

Michelle Prather, Judy Shopf

Scheduled to Serve on Sunday, December 18, 2011

	7:30	9:00	11:15
MC		Rhenné Cervantes	Margaret Mashburn
EMs	Ed Moore	Linda Wendle Gray Mitchell	Alison Pelegrin Richard Cryar
Acolytes		Cecily Stewart Carlton Stewart Emma Michell	Jack Vining Emery Michel Alainah Grace Reidy
Lectors		Lloyd Magee Michael Willis	Carol White Richard Cryar
Ushers	Charlie Stahr Don Kieffer	Mark Wendle John Girault Michael Forrester	David Yeates Don Duggan Ken Shell Paul Vining
Greeters		Michael Willis	Kerry Yeates
Altar Guild Team II			
Caring Ministry Leader Valerie Lynd 875-3055 & Judy Shopf 892-2527			
LESSONS FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2011 Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96, Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-20			