

THE MESSENGER

monthly newsletter from
All Saints Episcopal Church



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December, 2009

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RECTOR'S MESSAGE

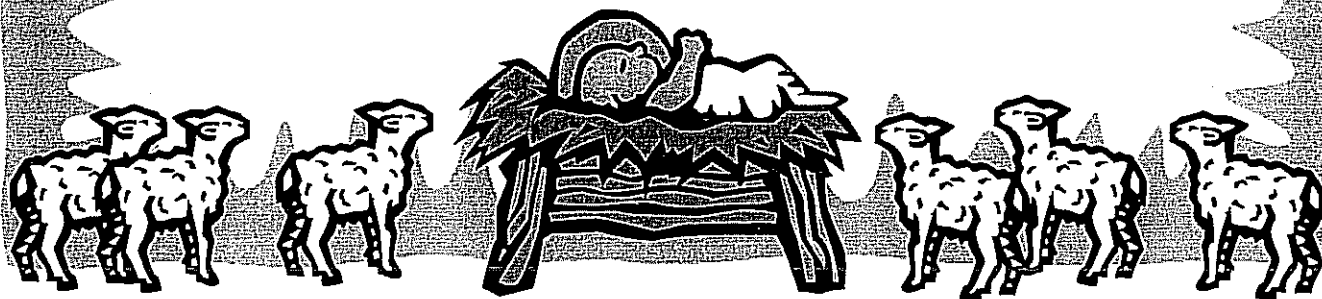
A Light Shines in the Darkness

By Kit Carlson, All Saints Rector

I have learned, over time, that if you don't go into stores, and if you don't watch too much TV, that you can actually delay the seasonal onslaught of noise and nonsense that is the world's cultural Christmas season ... for a few weeks at least.

It requires a certain amount of discipline (and plucky family members who are willing to go into Meijer or Rite Aid or Home Depot on your behalf), but it is possible to begin to live and move outside the gravitational force field of the holiday retail onslaught.

That is the challenge of Advent. To stand outside that gravitational field that seduces us to spend more than we have, do more than we are able, and eat more than



is good for us. To resist confusing Santa Claus with Baby Jesus. To claim the deeper, stronger and more powerful message of this season, the message that the world is trying -- with all its noise and nonsense -- to silence:

Peace on earth. Goodwill to all people. God and sinners reconciled. The death of this present evil age and the inbreaking of a new Kingdom with a new kind of King. Gifts given out of joy and thoughtfulness. The poor placed front and center. Old wrongs forgiven. New relationships begun. A light that shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

A holy Advent, well observed, will allow us to celebrate the Feast of the Incarnation with true joy and gratefulness.

Over the next few weeks at All Saints, we will observe this time before Christmas as a way to resist the pulls and pressures of the world outside.

Our worship will become more spare, more thoughtful, tapping the ancient prayers and tunes of our forebears in the faith.

We will offer an alternative narrative to the one that the world tells . . . with an Alternative Christmas Market that offers gifts that can help heal the world, not exploit it . . . and with a Saint Nicholas program for children that teaches them about the real saint and his commitment to God and then helps them assemble Christmas gifts to be sent to children in Third World

countries . . . and with a Wednesday night education series that listens deeply to Luke's gospel lessons of annunciation and preparation . . . and with a Longest Night service that acknowledges that some do not share the frenetic joy of the season and need space and silence to worship the Christ Child in peace.

Then, having waited in hope and expectation, we will celebrate Christmas with the joy and enthusiasm it deserves -- for twelve full days!

We can revel in the knowledge that God has always intended to rescue us, that God has entered our mortal, historical world as a tiny baby, and that God has transformed it . . . and us.

The schedule of Christmas worship is included in this newsletter, and I invite you to share with us in joy and celebration throughout the full twelve days of Christmas.

So get ready to get ready . . . to sit in peace and expectation through all four weeks of Advent, and then to rejoice in the festival of Christ's birth.

Slow down, breathe deeply, listen for the angel voices wafting through the darkness: *Glory to God in the highest, and peace ... peace ... peace to God's people on earth.*

In the mystery of Christ's incarnation,

+ *Kit*

What if Christmas Doesn't Feel Very Merry?

Not everyone feels joy and cheer this time of year.

For those who have lost a loved one, lost a job, or lost a dream, this season can feel disjointed and dispiriting.

For those who struggle in darkness for something more, a new life, a second chance, "ho, ho, ho and mistletoe" can feel irrelevant and painful.

All Saints will hold a Longest Night service in the chapel at 7 p.m. on Monday, December 21. This service is designed especially for people who don't feel able to enter into the frenzied joy of the season, and who want to have the time and space to recall the real heart of Christmas, the light that shines even in the darkness, and which the darkness cannot overcome.

There will be silence, space for prayer and reflection, and a simple Eucharist. If you feel the need of a different way to worship this season, join us.

Adult Education -- Looking With Luke for a Savior

"Behold! Luke Will Tell Us a Mystery!" is the theme of the Wednesday evening adult education sessions in December.

On the first three Wednesdays of the month, we will look at three of the stories of hope and annunciation from Luke's gospel.

This is the year that we read primarily out of the gospel of Luke on Sunday mornings, so this will start

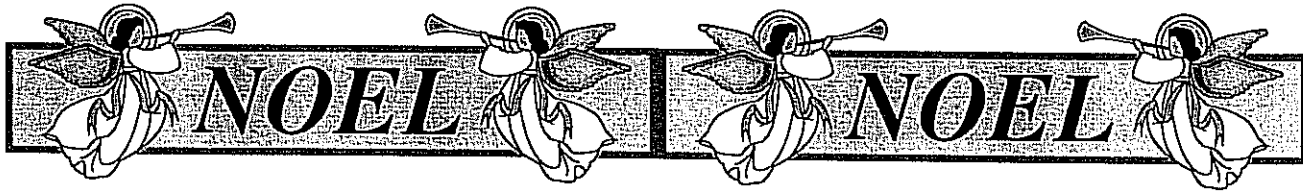
all of us off on a good beginning to this liturgical year.

Supper begins at 6 p.m. each Wednesday, and the class is held from 6:30 to 7:30, during which time the children's choir rehearses.

December 2: The Annunciation of John the Baptist.

December 9: The Annunciation of Jesus.

December 16: The Annunciation to the Shepherds.



Celebrating Christmas at All Saints

Bring your friends, bring your family members, invite your neighbors to celebrate the birth of Christ at All Saints this year. After four weeks of Advent, it is always a treat to sing carols, and to celebrate all twelve days of Christmas with glad and generous hearts.

We begin by packing Advent away and pulling out the Christmas decorations as we green the church for Christmas, immediately following the 10 a.m. service on December 20. All ages and stages of life are welcome to help set up the creches, twine garlands and hang wreaths, while enjoying a simple soup lunch.

Then the Feast of the Incarnation begins on December 24, with an intergenerational family service at 5 p.m., and a more traditional, formal service at 9

p.m. The Children's and Cherub choirs will sing at the early service, and the adult choir and bell choir will offer music starting with carols and congregational singing at 9 p.m., and a festal Holy Eucharist beginning at 9:30 p.m. We learned last year that by holding the more traditional service earlier in the evening, that more people who are not willing or able to be out late at night were able to worship with us.

On the First Sunday of Christmas, we will hear the story of our salvation and sing a raft of Christmas Carols at the Service of Lessons and Carols at 10 a.m. On the Second Sunday of Christmas, our children and youth will offer their Christmas Pageant at the 10 a.m. service. The season concludes on January 6, as we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany and de-green the church, beginning at 7 p.m.

Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24

5 p.m. -- Intergenerational Christmas Service: Gather at the creche with your children and family to greet the Christ Child at his birth. This service is designed for all ages, from the smallest to the eldest. The Children's and Cherub choirs will sing, and we will celebrate a joyful Eucharist.

9 p.m. -- Carols and Choir: The All Saints Choir offers seasonal music and the congregation sings carols as we gather for the festal Eucharist.

9:30 p.m. -- Festal Eucharist: This more formal service features music from the All Saints Choir and bell choir and instrumentalists. Incense, bells, chant and all your favorite carols will help honor Christ's birth.

Christmas Day, Friday, December 25

10 a.m. -- Quiet Eucharist: Gather in the chapel to celebrate Christmas Day. Dorothea Fields will offer seasonal music on the harp.

First Sunday of Christmas, December 27

8 a.m. -- Holy Eucharist, Rite I

10 a.m. -- Christmas Lessons and Carols with Eucharist

Second Sunday of Christmas, January 3

8 a.m. -- Holy Eucharist, Rite I

10 a.m. -- Children's Christmas Pageant with Eucharist

Feast of the Epiphany, Wednesday, January 6

5:30 p.m. -- Degreening of the church

6:15 p.m. -- Potluck supper

7 p.m. -- Holy Eucharist

Standing or Kneeling? Two Sides of One Worship Experience

The directions in our Prayer Book liturgy offer two positions for worshippers to take during the Eucharistic Prayer – standing or kneeling. At All Saints, we can see people standing OR kneeling around the sanctuary. Which way is right? BOTH ways are right, for different reasons, and express different spiritualities of the Eucharist, both of which are appropriate for a worshipper.

Here, two All Saints parishioners share their reasons for standing or kneeling during the prayer of consecration. These reflections are offered to you so that, whether you are a kneeler or a stander, you can empathize with your brothers and sisters who pray “the other way.” (PLEASE – don’t ever think of them as praying “the wrong way!”)

As a note of etiquette for those of you who stand ... you may be blocking the view of someone who is kneeling behind you. If you prefer to stand, please try to find a place toward the outside walls of the sanctuary, so that those who kneel can see up the center aisle toward the altar.

A note of advice for those of you who kneel: Come on down closer to the front, or choose a place along the center aisle. And a small note of spiritual direction for both standers and kneelers: Make a place in your hearts and your prayers for those people who pray “the other way.” They are worshipping Christ, too.

+ *Pastor Kit*

1. Kneeling as an Act of Devotion and Humility

By Janet Chegwiddden

When I was growing up in the Episcopal Church, we worshipped each Sunday with the service of Holy Communion as presented in the 1928 Book of Common Prayer, using the one and only rite. We spent most of the service kneeling. Each time the priest said, “Let us pray,” the congregation knelt.

The adoption of the new prayer book in 1979 brought an additional rite for Holy Communion and more Eucharistic Prayers from which to choose.

I became accustomed to standing for the Collect and for the Prayers of the People (formerly called the Prayer for the State of Christ’s Church.)

However, the congregation returned to kneeling after the Sursum Corda (“Lift up your hearts.”) for the Prayer of Consecration and remained kneeling until the end of the service.

When I worship God, kneeling is to me both natural and right as a way to give outward expression of my feelings of reverence and devotion in recognition of the Divine Presence.

As the Lord lowered Himself to the point of death on the cross, I kneel to meet Christ in a posture of adoration and humility.

By kneeling I am more capable of keeping my thoughts from wandering and my heart focused on

God. In this posture, I can close my eyes and remain more receptive to God’s presence.

As Episcopalians, we do believe in our Lord’s Real Presence during this service of Holy Communion. The priest asks the Holy Spirit to do for us what Jesus did at the Last Supper, and the Holy Spirit responds by sanctifying the bread and wine to be for us the Body and Blood of Christ. The nature of that presence is undefined and a true mystery, but I kneel in reverence to reflect upon, and be drawn into, this Holy Mystery.

Kneeling allows me a space for contemplation, reflection, silence and the worship of our saving God. I am particularly drawn to the doxology spoken at the ending of the Eucharistic Prayer when the priest raises the consecrated bread and wine to offer before God Christ’s one and only sacrifice as an offering which joins Christ’s own offering of Himself to God.

We ask that this be effective in our own lives today. We offer ourselves through Christ and with Christ and in Christ to God. It is a moving and meaningful moment for me and it is important that I can view the actions while kneeling.

2. Standing in a Communal Celebration of the Eucharist

By Colleen Hegg

I was raised Roman Catholic, and my transition to the Episcopal Church after I met my husband, Eric, was initially easy. But our very first Sunday at St. Andrew’s in Madison, Wisconsin, changed my feeling of comfort when he remained standing and every one else knelt during communion.

I had knelt with the congregation, and was giving him the evil eye, imploring him to kneel with us. He whispered

that he wanted to stand and that I should do whatever felt comfortable to me.

What felt comfortable to me? As part of my decision-making process, I discovered that standing was the universal position for communion prayer.

At the first Council of Nicaea (325 CE) one of the canons created actually prohibited kneeling during the liturgy on Sundays and in the fifty days of Eastertide. In the late Middle Ages, during the reformation, the Eucharist celebration converted from being a joyful remembrance of the resurrection to being a more sacrificial act, and kneeling became prevalent. The 1979 revision of the Book of Common Prayer restored the celebratory nature of the Eucharist of the ancient church.

For me, the real question behind standing or kneeling became how to participate in the service. Will it be a "Good Friday" moment or an "Easter" experience? I remember during my youth the awe and wonderment I felt the moment the priest physically broke the bread.

During the Eucharist, when standing, I feel as if I am joining the altar party, even though I am not up there. By standing, I feel as if I am actively participating.

There definitely is a time for kneeling in personal prayer, but when standing during the Great Thanksgiving, it is not my own personal prayer, but a community prayer.

When standing, I am worshipping among a community of faithful people and am praying, not as an individual, but as "We, the church." Eighteen years ago I chose to stand, and I still enjoy being part of the celebration. This is what feels comfortable to me.

An Outreach Gathering of Items for Homeless at Advent House

By Carolyn Plante

Have you ever had the frustration of reaching for the shampoo, only to find an empty container? Or having to squeeze the toothpaste to get the very last glob out? Well, imagine not having access to any of those personal care items that we take for granted every day.

In the season of giving, we are asking you to "give a little."

With your help, Advent House tries to provide the homeless with personal care items. Small items work best so the person can carry them wherever they go. Small bottles of shampoo, shaving cream, disposable razors, toothpaste, hand soap, toothbrushes, deodorant and sanitary napkins. Even hotel size items are great!

It doesn't take a lot to help someone have their dignity. Please place the items in the collection barrels, either upstairs or down.

A big thank you, from All Saints Outreach.

Concert Here at All Saints December 20

The upcoming Christmas show by Jamie-Sue Seal and John Latini to benefit the Housing Assistance Fund, will be held at 7 p.m. Sunday, December 20, in the All Saints sanctuary.

Jamie-Sue, www.jamiesueseal.com, and John, www.myspace.com/johnlatini, have performed together in several different bands and as solo artists for years. They will play many holiday shows in December, with their final performance at All Saints. This is family-friendly music with wit and charm.

Most of the proceeds will go to the Housing Assistance Fund for Haven House and Loaves and Fishes, outreach missions of All Saints, which will not benefit this year from the annual major fundraiser, the Fruits and Greens Sale, and really needs our help. So plan on a wonderful (early) night of music right here at All Saints, December 20 at 7 p.m. Tickets (a suggested donation of \$8) are available from Steve Findley, (517) 402-2582 or steve@findley.org or from Susie Pearson in the church office.



..... *Don't forget to wear your name tag*

Day of the Dead Fiesta draws another big crowd

By Ellen DeRosia

All Saint's third annual Día de los Muertos celebration filled the undercroft on November 1 with aromas of Mexican food, sounds of the Zapopan Mariachi musicians, and swirling colors of the Fantasia Folklorico dancers.

More than 200 people gathered to remember their family members and friends who have died. A community altar was filled with bright orange marigolds, candles, sugar skulls, photos and mementos.

Brightly colored Papel Picados, tissue paper banners cut into intricate designs, hanging from the ceiling circled the room. Canterbury MSU hosted a bilingual mass immediately before the fiesta.

Father Fred Thelen, from Cristo Rey Church in south Lansing, delivered the message and the Zapopan Mariachis provided special music for the service.

The planning committee for the event was co-chaired by Tom and Melissa White with assistance from founding chairs Vic Rauch and Ellen DeRosia. Other committee members included Kit Carlson, Bob Dalton, Shannon Fineout, Marguerite Halverson, Sarah Midzalkowski and Sheila Wiitala. Many other parishioners assisted by contributing desserts and beverages, helping set up, keeping the buffet tables filled with food catered by Los Tres Amigos, and cleaning up. Many thanks go to each person who helped and who participated in the celebration.

Parish Life, December 2009

By Marguerite Halverson

Parish Life is continuing the process of planning activities for All Saints in 2010. Look for Wharton events, game nights, and a new outing or two being organized over the next few months. Suggestions—and help—are most welcome; please contact Marguerite Halverson at 517-333-0251 or halverse@msu.edu.

Second-Sunday Breakfast, Sunday, December 13, 8:45 to 9:45 a.m.

Once a month, All Saints offers a hot breakfast to anyone interested in food and fellowship between the 8 and 10 a.m. services. Come and join your friends or meet someone new at the meal of the month. Breakfast includes eggs and sausages; croissant or Danish, juice, and coffee—all for a very reasonable \$3. See you in the undercroft.

Christmas Coffeehouse!!!! Friday, December 18, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., in the undercroft.

The coffeehouse celebrates its fourth Christmas in the All Saints undercroft. If you've never attended, the coffeehouse is an opportunity to kick back one Friday a month to sing, listen to music and poetry (or other readings), or offer a performance of your own for others to enjoy. You can sign up—or just grab a seat—when you arrive that evening. Food and beverages are available; you can even bring something to share, if you wish. The atmosphere is relaxed; the evening full. There's no better way to start your weekend. We hope to see you there.

Benefit concert at All Saints! Sunday, December 20, at 7 p.m., in the sanctuary.

Mark your calendars now for the upcoming show by Jamie-Sue Seal and John Latini to benefit the Housing Assistance Fund. Tickets (a suggested donation of \$8 each) are available NOW from Steve Findley (517-402-2582) / steve@findley.org. Both John and Jamie-Sue have performed at the All Saints Coffeehouse to tremendous enthusiasm. Come join your All Saints' Friends for a fantastic concert.

Greening of the Church — December 20, after the 10 a.m. service.

As Episcopalians, we don't officially begin celebrating the Christmas season until the close of Advent; we then go all out. Welcome the Christmas season to All Saints by helping green the church. Sub sandwiches will be provided by Parish Life for all volunteers. We are also accepting donations of soup, fruit and other sides to round out the meal. Sign up on the Parish Life bulletin board or contact Marguerite Halverson at halverse@msu.edu or (517) 333-0251. Degreening of the church, along with a potluck dinner, occurs at the Epiphany service on January 6; please mark your calendars for this gathering, too.

Interested in assisting with Parish Life? Please call Marguerite Halverson at 517-333-0251 or e-mail her at halverse@msu.edu.

December 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 12:15 p.m. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Vestry 7:30 p.m. AA	2 1:00 p.m. Parkinson's Support Group 5:30 p.m. Cherub Choir 5:30 p.m. HE/Healing Service 6:00 p.m. Supper 6:30 p.m. Adult Ed 6:30 p.m. Children's Choir 7:30 p.m. Debtors A	3 7:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with breakfast following 6:30 p.m. ACLU 6:30 p.m. Bell Choir 7:30 p.m. ACOA 7:30 p.m. Adult Choir 8:00 p.m. AIAnon	4 1:00 p.m. Duplicate Bridge 7:00 p.m. CMSU Music Team Rehearsal	5 9:00 a.m. Parish Care 10:00 a.m. Advent House 10:00 a.m. Alt Mart
6 Advent 2 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist 9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist 11:30 a.m. Adult Forum 11:30 a.m. Bell Choir 11:30 a.m. Youth Christian Ed Class 11:30 a.m. Veggie Tales – "The Joy of Giving" 12:00 p.m. Alt Mart 2:00 p.m. EL Writers Forum 5:00 p.m. Canterbury MSU	7 1:30 p.m. Staff 7:00 p.m. Prayer/Study 7:30 p.m. AA	8 12:15 p.m. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Cancer Support Group 7:30 p.m. AA	9 5:30 p.m. Cherub Choir 5:30 p.m. HE/Healing Service 6:00 p.m. Supper 6:30 p.m. Adult Ed 6:30 p.m. Children's Choir 7:30 p.m. Debtors A	10 7:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with breakfast following 6:00 p.m. Outreach 6:30 p.m. Bell Choir 7:30 p.m. ACOA 7:30 p.m. Adult Choir 8:00 p.m. AIAnon	11 1:00 p.m. Duplicate Bridge 7:00 p.m. CMSU Music Team Rehearsal	12
13 Advent 3 Birthday Sunday 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist 8:45 a.m. 2 nd Sunday Breakfast 9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study 9:45 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist 11:30 a.m. Bell Choir 11:30 a.m. Youth Christian Ed Class 2:00 p.m. EL Writers Forum 5:00 p.m. Canterbury MSU	14 1:30 p.m. Staff 5:45 p.m. Finance Meeting 7:00 p.m. Prayer/Study 7:30 p.m. AA	15 Messenger Deadline 8:00 a.m. Breakfast at Coral Gables 12:15 p.m. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Buildings & Grounds Meeting 7:30 p.m. AA	16 5:30 p.m. Cherub Choir 5:30 p.m. HE/Healing Service 6:00 p.m. Supper 6:30 p.m. Adult Ed 6:30 p.m. Children's Choir 7:30 p.m. Debtors A	17 7:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with breakfast following 6:30 p.m. Bell Choir 7:30 p.m. ACOA 7:30 p.m. Adult Choir 8:00 p.m. AIAnon	18 1:00 p.m. Duplicate Bridge 6:00 p.m. MOPs 7:00 p.m. CMSU Music Team Rehearsal 7:30 p.m. Coffee House	19 9:30 a.m. Prayer Needlers
20 Advent 4 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist 9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study 9:45 a.m. Children's Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist 11:30 a.m. Bell Choir 11:30 a.m. Greening of the Church 11:30 a.m. Youth Christian Ed Class 5:00 p.m. Canterbury MSU 7 p.m. Benefit Concert	21 1:30 p.m. Staff 7 p.m. Longest Night Service 7:00 p.m. Prayer/Study group 7:30 p.m. AA	22 12:15 p.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Quilters 7:00 p.m. Vestry 7:30 p.m. AA	23 7:30 p.m. Debtors A	24 Christmas Eve Office Closed 5 p.m. Inter-generational Christmas service w/Eucharist 7:30 p.m. ACOA 8:00 p.m. AIAnon 9:00 p.m. Festal Holy Eucharist with Choirs	25 Christmas Office Closed 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist	26
27 Christmas 1 8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist 9:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Lessons & Carols 11:30 a.m. Bell Choir 5:00 p.m. Canterbury MSU	28 1:30 p.m. ELWC 1:30 p.m. Staff 7:00 p.m. Prayer/Study 7:30 p.m. AA	29 12:15 p.m. Bible Study 7:30 p.m. AA	30 7:30 p.m. Debtors A	31 New Years Eve Office Closed 7:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with breakfast following 7:30 p.m. ACOA 8:00 p.m. AIAnon		

ACOA = Adult Children of Alcoholics
ANS = Abbott Nursery School

AIAnon = Family and Friends of Alcoholics
Debtors A = Debtors Anonymous

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Canterbury MSU

The Episcopal Chaplaincy at Michigan State University services are held at 5 p.m. Sunday evenings during the fall and spring MSU semesters with dinner following in the Undercroft. For more information, please email emmsu@msu.edu.

Chaplain: The Rev. Sarah Midzalkowski